HISTORY OF SKYE

A RECORD OF THE FAMILIES,
THE SOCIAL CONDITIONS,
AND
THE LITERATURE OF THE ISLAND.

BY

ALEXANDER NICOLSON, M.A.

Twelve Illustrations.
Three Genealogical Tables, etc.

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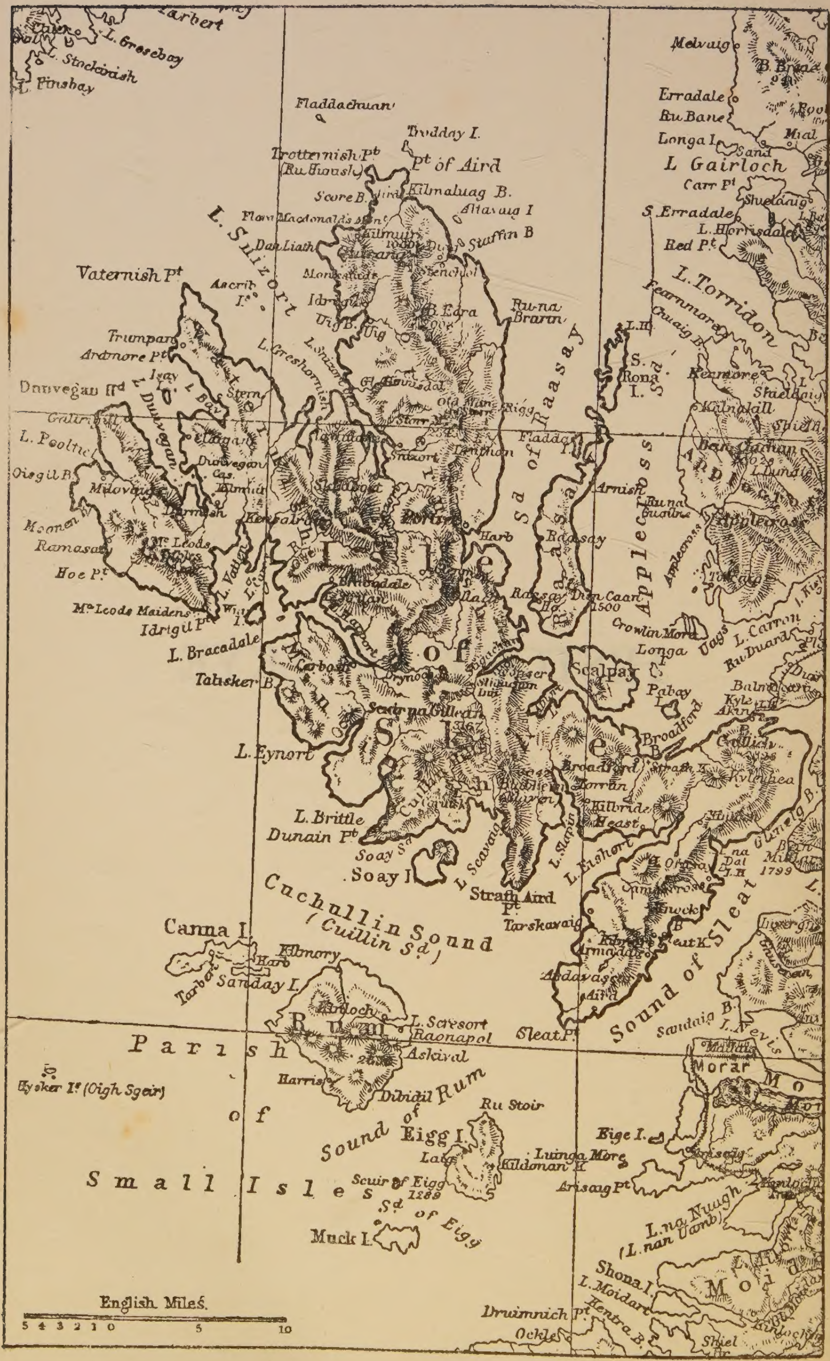
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Fladdachuan
Trodday I.
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(Ru Hounsh)
Pt of Aird
Score B.
Kilmaluag B.
Altavaig I.
Flora Macdonald's Mont.
Kilmuir
Staffin B
Dun Liath
Vaternish Pt
Ascrib Is.
L. Snizort
Uig B.
Uig
B. Edra
Ru-na Brarin
Trumpan
Ardmore Pt
Dunvegan Hd
L. Dunvegan
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Sd. of Raasay
Galtrigill
L. Pooltiel
Oisgill B.
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Dunvegan Cas.
Old Man of Storr
Fladda
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Soay Sd
Soay I.
L. Scavaig
L. Slapin
L. Eishort
Strath Aird
Tarskavaig
Cuchullin Sound (Cuillin Sd.)
Canna I.
Kilmory
Sanday I.
Rum
L. Scresort
Askival
Harris
Dibidil
Sound of Rum
Ru Stoir
Eigg I.
Kildonan
Scuir of Eigg 1289
Sd of Eigg
Muck I.
Parish of Small Isles
Hyskeir Is. (Oigh Sgeir)
Armadale
Sleat Pt
Sound of Sleat
Sandaig B.
L. Nevis
Morar
Arisaig
Arisaig Pt
L. na Nuagh (L. nan Uamh)
Shona I.
L. Moidart
Drumnich Pt
Ockle
Melvaig
Erradale
Ru Bane
Longa I.
L. Gairloch
Carr Pt
S. Erradale
Red Pt
L. Torridon
Fearnmore
S. Rona I.
Applecross
Sd. of Applecross
L. Carron
Kyle Akin
Kyleakin
Glenelg B.
English Miles.
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It will be noticed that the traditional story, often unverified, and mayhap unverifiable, occupies a prominent place in this work; and its inclusion will no doubt be deplored by those who are severely historical. But, in treating of the history of a people whose lives have been influenced so profoundly by such tales, one feels that to ignore them wholly would be unpatriotic, apart altogether from their ethical implications, and their usefulness in illustrating certain phases in the evolution of our race. Through them, readers have been drawn into the pleasant by-paths of history. They certainly help to enliven its otherwise grave and monotonous aspect; and do they not often afford us more accurate glimpses of the manner of life and the aspirations of a people than those narratives which are founded on the most reliable records?

ALEXANDER NICOLSON.

Glasgow, 1930.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Map of Skye ... ... *Facing Title Page.*
Dun Beag ... ... *Facing page* 9
Symbolic Stone of Raasay ... ... ,, 9
Dun Sgathaich ... ... ,, 48
Castle Camus ... ... ,, 48
Dun Akin ... ... ,, 80
Castle Uisdean ... ... ,, 80
Coire na Creiche ... ... ,, 104
Kilchrist ... ... ,, 168
Eynort ... ... ,, 168
Duntulm ... ... ,, 248
Dunvegan ... ... ,, 353
Brochel Castle ... ... ,, 432

GENEALOGICAL TABLES.

MacDonalds ... ... *Page* 56
MacLeods of Dunvegan ... ... ,, 24
MacLeods of Raasay ... ... ,, 456

HISTORY OF SKYE.

CHAPTER I.

PREHISTORIC REMAINS.

THE wayfarer who strays through the silent glens, and over the lone moorlands of Skye, cannot fail to be impressed by the number and variety of the relics of antiquity that he everywhere encounters. He will notice that there, as elsewhere, these memorials of the past have suffered severely, through the years, at the hands of the utilitarian and the despoiler; but they still retain much of their original features, and they are of deep interest to us, for they represent the handiwork of our prehistoric ancestors.

DUNS.

Of these remains of a bygone age, the most common type is the dun, or the broch; and it is no exaggeration to say that, in the whole of Britain, there is no other region, of equal area, where so many of these ancient forms of fortifications are met with as in the island of Skye. On making a casual enumeration of them a list of eighty-three was compiled, and there are doubtless many more.

Some of them, it is true, are now represented merely by a few courses of masonry, and great heaps of dilapidation; but there are others, such as Dun Beag at Struan, Dun Borrodale in Raasay, and Dun Osdale in Duirinish, where a considerable portion of wall is still left standing; and where the general structure of "Balla na Fianntaichean" may be studied with tolerable ease.

They are more numerous around the coast, especially in positions where no bold escarpments front the sea; but several are found far inland, as Dun Bhuirbh in Trotarnish, Dun Arkaig in Glen Ullinish, and Dun Hallin in Waternish.

All of them show a uniformity of construction, of plan, and of position, which is indeed wonderful; and they would seem to differ merely in magnitude, and in height. Thus all are broad-based, roughly circular in outline, and are built of large rectangular blocks of local stone, well knit together in definite courses. There is always a double wall, the inner approximately perpendicular, the outer sloping gradually inwards, so that the width of the whole narrows according to the height. The basal portion of the wall is from 12 to 15 feet wide, and here are found two, and sometimes three, chambers opening towards the courtyard of the building. These niches are built after the manner of the beehive type of primitive dwellings; the upper course overlapping the lower, until the topmost layer may be covered by a single slab of stone.

Stairs lead from these chambers to intramural galleries covered by large lintels, and a special feature of the structures is that the upper portion of the wall is hollow, the passages being arranged in tiers, and covered with large flagstones, the roof of the lower being the floor of the one immediately above it.

There is only one doorway, 3 feet high and 2 feet 9 inches wide, spanned by monster monoliths; and in this entrance there is invariably found a guard chamber, if not two, in the thickness of the wall. There are no other openings whatsoever in the outer wall, but it is noticeable that there are small apertures, which may have been "peepholes," in certain of the passages and chambers in the upper storeys, and looking into the courtyard of the building.

It is noteworthy that no trace of mortar has ever been found in these buildings, but where limestone, or other fusible rock, prevails locally, recourse was sometimes had to vitrification—*i.e.*, the melting of the outer face of the higher parts of the wall by the application of intense heat; so that the fused material flowed down the lower courses, welding stone to stone, when it had cooled, into one solid mass. Evidences of this mysterious process are found in such duns as that of Skudaborg, near Uig, and in the old fort on an island that lies off Dun Sgathaich, on the west of Sleat.

Though there is little now left to attest it, these duns were originally of a considerable height. Many people now living remember the time when a good specimen of this structure, in the island of Raasay, was over 17 feet high, before the upper courses had been dislodged for the purpose of providing stone for an extension of the local school. And Pennant, who toured the Highlands in 1770, tells us that Dun Beag in Struan was then 18 feet in height; its walls are over 12 feet high, in places, at the present day.

The fact that there is no indication of windows in the outer wall suggests the conclusion that these buildings were roofless, and that, accordingly, they were not places of residence. What then was their function? It seems safe to answer that they were merely places of defence, and of refuge, to which the population of the region betook themselves, when beset by an invading foe. And well they would serve their purpose, for they must have been well-nigh impregnable, so far as primitive weapons could do them any damage. They could not be set on fire; and, owing to the very constricted nature of their only doorway, entrance could never have been effected, so long as the defenders offered any resistance.

That these forts could provide a safe sanctuary for a large community is shown by the extent even of the floor space, without taking cognisance of the accommodation afforded by the chambers, and passages, within the walls. Thus the diameter of Dun Beag in Struan is 60 feet; giving the court inside an area of over 310 square yards.

It is popularly believed that these buildings were used as sites for beacons, and that view is upheld both by tradition and by the early writers who make reference to them. Thus Martin Martin, in his account of the Western Isles, says of the duns of Skye: "All these forts stand upon eminences, and are so disposed that there is not one of them which is not in view of some other; and by this means, when a fire is made on any one fort, it is in a few moments afterwards communicated to all the rest, and this has always been observed upon sight of any number of foreign vessels, or boats, approaching the coasts."

Again, in the Old Statistical Account, published in 1795, the Rev. William Bethune, minister of the Parish of Duirinish, speaks of them thus: "Duns seem not to have been roofed, and were probably intended for places to make signals from by smoke, and fire."

All, of course, agree that the beacon usually served the purpose of the telegram to primitive man when alarms were to be communicated to his tribe; but it is highly improbable, if not impossible, that the site of the fire was the dun. The fire could be lit only in the courtyard of the building, and it would require to be a mighty conflagration to show flames above the topmost course, when that was, in some cases at least, 40 feet high, apart altogether from the obvious contingency that a fire of such magnitude would render the fort untenable for a considerable period of time after it had died out. Indeed, all the evidence seems to force the conclusion upon us that the beacon was raised on the lofty mound so often found in close proximity to these ancient forts, and that may be suggested as an explanation of the problem of the higher knoll that invariably overlooks the site of the dun—a problem that has so long puzzled archæologists.

Naturally enough, toll has been taken of the masonry of these buildings for the construction of dykes and dwelling-houses, with the result that most of them are now merely chaotic masses of dilapidation. Where excavation has been carried out, as at Dun Beag in Struan, numerous specimens of primitive weapons and implements have been discovered. There were stone implements by the hundred, beautifully fashioned and polished, axes, hammers, and arrowheads, so many, indeed, that one chamber was piled high with these arms of the past, and their computation in hundreds is no exaggeration. Implements of horn, and of bone, such as combs and bodkins, were also found; and vessels made of baked clay were represented. Amid the heterogeneous collection of these ancient relics, one noticed a large mass of the slag of iron, showing that the fort was occupied at least as late as the "Iron Age."

Despite the numerous examples we have of the duns, their origin is still enshrouded in mystery. Tradition says they were built by the Feinn, mythical warriors of old; while the early records declare that they were erected by the Danes during their occupation of the Western Isles: but from the nature of the relics found in them, it may safely be averred that these towers were hoary with the moss and the lichens of ages long before the first Norse galleys made their appearance in the western seas.

BEEHIVE DWELLINGS.

The formation of the chambers in the walls of the duns suggest other structures one meets with in Skye, namely, the beehive type of dwelling. These buildings are huddled closely together, circular in form, and roughly cone-shaped in plan; so that the topmost course can be covered by one large slab. The best examples of such dwellings are found at Lon Fearn, on the east of Trotarnish, where they are called Tighean nan Druinich, or Druids' Houses; and in the "island" in the drained St. Columba's Lake at Monkstadt. From their restricted accommodation, and especially their location at the latter place, it has been suggested that they were used by the monks as places for contemplation and prayer. There can be no doubt they were; and Dr. Petrie has characterised these ruins in St. Columba's Lake as the "best example of a monastic establishment in the kingdom." From the nature of the remains discovered in buildings of this type, however, some at least were constructed long before the Christian era.

THE ERD HOUSES.

Constructions of a different type, the earth houses, or "Picts' Houses," as they are often called, also occur in Skye. These are long, narrow tunnels flanked and roofed with stone, penetrating the side of a hill, often to a distance of 30 yards, and widening at their inmost end into a circular chamber which is so low that one cannot stand upright in it. Structures of this type have been discovered among other places, at Beninivaig, at Scorrybreck, at Ullinish, at Claigean, at Loch Duagraich, and at Vatten, where is found perhaps the most elaborate of them all, with its offsets from the main passage and its large inner chamber. Their purpose is somewhat obscure, but Martin Martin, who wrote an account of the Western Isles in 1716, says: "They served to hide a few people, and their goods in time of war." And he adds information to the effect that they were also used as storehouses for corn, and as retreats for the people in the stress of winter.

THE BURIAL CAIRNS.

Examples of the chambered cairns are also fairly common. There is the remains of one at Eyre Point in Raasay, where the foundation of the cairn, the dolmen, and its rude stone cist, may still be seen, though the covering stones have been removed for building purposes. At Liveras, in Broadford, one was opened in 1832; and in its burial chamber were found a few stone implements, and some human bones. The traveller, Thomas Pennant, records that, in 1770, when he was in Skye, he was presented by Mrs. MacDonald of Kingsburgh, the famous Flora MacDonald, with an urn found in a stone chest beneath "an immense cairn"; and, he adds, "the urn was of excellent workmanship." It was probably to this relic that the Rev. Malcolm MacLeod, the father of "Mr. Roderick" of Snizort, refers when he says: "In the cairns are found urns wherein were deposited the ashes of renowned chiefs. One such was discovered recently in a cist 5 feet by 4½ feet, in which also was a sword and pin of compound metal. The urn was nicely carved."

Adamnan, in his account of the conversion of the chief, Artbrannan, who came to Skye to be baptised by St. Columba, and died immediately after the ceremony, says: "And his companions buried him, raising a heap of stones over his grave."

STONE CIRCLES.

In view of the large number of stone-circles that are found in several of the islands of the Hebrides, it is surprising that so few have been preserved in Skye; while of those that are undoubted representatives of that type of construction, but a few isolated monoliths now remain to mark their site. Only three authentic examples are known, two of them in the parish of Strath and one in the district of Uig.

Among other discoveries of the work of early man in Skye, it may be recalled that during the operation of draining St. Columba's Lake, two canoes, shaped and hollowed out of a single tree-trunk, were found; but they have been lost.

A party engaged in cutting peat in Braes, in the year 1910, happened to alight on what seems to have been the site of a "factory" of Neolithic times. There were whole mounds of the "flakes" of flint, and of other cherty rocks, rough rejected shapes they were, but only two or three specimens of the finished article were procured among the debris.

Then, again, in the summer of 1913, the writer discovered a bloomery, or ancient furnace, in the island of Raasay. It lay in close proximity to that outcrop of ironstone where the winning of the ore was first begun by Messrs. Baird of Coatbridge. The hearth was roughly circular in form, and about 7 feet in diameter. Like the sides of the building, it was constructed of the refractory Torridonian sandstone stained deep red by many a fire. All around and within the enclosure lay heaps of the slag of iron, incorporating fragments of undigested limestone that had evidently been employed as a flux.

It was with keen regret that one learned, after the turmoil of the World War had subsided, that the materials of this interesting relic of antiquity had been used in the repairing of an adjoining roadway, so that scarcely a trace of it now remains.

Amongst a great mass of other interesting matter, only a passing reference can be made to the discovery of such things as sculptured stones (the famous symbolic stones of Raasay, Fiskavaig, and Snizort), stone coffins, and weapons of bronze. When, however, we turn from a study of the prehistoric relics to consider the written records of the island in early times, we are confronted with such meagre and unsubstantial materials that the greatest difficulty is experienced in constructing a clear and coherent narrative of the whole. Indeed, so dim is our knowledge of Skye in the remote past, that there is much truth in the dictum that its early history is as misty as its mountains. A few facts do emerge out of the pervading darkness, but they scarcely avail to allow us to fix our bearings with any degree of certainty.

One of the first to mention the island was Ptolemy of Alexandria, who flourished in the year 120 A.D. He included Skye in his famous map, but placed it midway between Caithness and Norway, and called it "Sketis." Stray references to the island are found in the works of the Irish monks, as the statement in the "Annals of Ulster" to the effect that the people of Skye paid tribute to Baedun, son of Carril, who died in 581. Tighernac, too, writes of Skye as, when he adverts to the secession of the Scots clergy from the domination of Rome, he says they went to Ireland accompanied by the sons of Gartnaidh; and they took with them the Columban clergy of Skye—"navigatio filiorum Gartnaidh ad Hiberniam cum plebe Scith."

These are cited as a few of the uncertain echoes that reach us down the years from that distant past; but so indefinite are they that one can make but little of their jumbled sounds.

We are not clear who the occupants of the island were in that faint dawn of history; whether they were Goths from Scandinavia, or Goidels from Europe's central plains.

Nor does the evidence from place-names help us much in our enquiry. The word Skye, itself, is most obdurate in yielding to derivation; and while some philologists advocate a Gaelic origin, others are as insistent on tracing it to the language of the Norse. Thus, MacBain says the root is Celtic, and is "sci," which means cut; and it is noteworthy that in the "Annals of Ulster" it is called "Scith." Following his lead, Henderson also holds that the word is pre-Norse.

On the other hand, the Rev. Dr. John MacPherson of Sleat was of the opinion that it was derivable from the Norse "sky" (cloud) and "ey" (island), "the Misty Island," and this interpretation is supported by the references made to Skye in early song and saga. Apart from the fact that it is frequently styled by James MacPherson, of Ossianic fame, "The Isle of Mist," there is the supposition that this feature is such as to impress its early inhabitants much more powerfully than its indented coastline in the days when cartography was in its infancy; and one is lured to that view by the fact that the most prominent topographical features on the island have names of Norse origin.

But when we reflect that the term for island in Norse (-ay or -ey) invariably takes the form -aidh in Gaelic; that it is persistent, and that the name of Skye shows no trace whatsover of that ending, we are forced to abandon this position.

Now the "folk" derivation is from Sgiath (a wing); and Dean Munro, who wrote in 1549, thus refers to the island: "This ile is callit by the Erishe, Ellan Skyane, that is, in English, the Wingitt ile, be reason it has maney wyngs and points lyand furth frae it through the devyding of the loches"; and Martin Martin, writing in 1716, says: "Skie, in the ancient language, Skianach, *i.e.* winged, is so called because the two opposite northern promontories—Waternish lying N.W., and Trotarnish lying N.E., resemble wings." It may be added that several of our bards, notably Morrison, "An Clarsair Dall," and Mackay, "Am Piobaire Dall," often call the island "Clar Sgith."

The earliest form of the word we know is "Sketis," in Ptolemy's map; and one is inclined to equate this name with the

THE SYMBOLIC STONE OF RAASAY.

DUN BEAG.

Celtic form, "Skeitos," which means "wing." We have seen that Tighernae calls the island Sgith; while Adamnan, in his "Life of St. Columba" (c. 700), refers to it as Scia. One is strongly persuaded to call this the Gaelic equivalent for wing; and to do so with the greater confidence in view of the suggestion in that book that the language spoken in Skye at that time was Gaelic. In narrating the advent of the heathen chief, Artbrannan, already referred to, to the island of Skye, he says that the converted chief was baptised in the water called "Dobur Artbranani." . . . "Fluvius que ejusdem loci in quo idem baptisma acceperat ex nomine ejus *Dobur* Artbranani usque in hodiernum nominatus diem ab accolis vocitatus."

These facts would therefore seem to postulate a Gaelic origin for the word "Skye," and inferentially that the inhabitants of the island were Goidelic Celts, kindred with the Irish and the people of the Isle of Man. In view, however, of the prevalence in Skye of place-names of truly Norse origin, it may, with safety, be averred that Gaelic had received a severe set-back during the Norwegian regime; but that in no way warrants the conclusion that it had altogether ceased to be the spoken language of the people during the long period of foreign domination that extended to close on 400 years.

The Coming of the Norse.

The freehold system of tenure, whereby the land was inalienably vested in a particular family, and the eldest succeeded to the whole property, continued to exist in Scandinavia until the middle of the ninth century. It had many disadvantages. As the estate was indivisible, the younger members of the family had no means of maintenance at home, and were constrained, by economic necessity, to fend for themselves elsewhere. Believing that plundering was a virtue, they harried, among other lands, the Western Isles of Scotland. Their depredations were confined to the summer months, the winter being spent at home. Their first recorded descent on the Hebrides was in 794, and in that year, according to the Irish annalists, Skye was devastated from end to end; and we may conclude that, like other places, that unhappy isle was seldom free from their attentions for the next ninety years.

About 875, however, their incursions assumed a new phase. They then came not as invaders, but as immigrants, who wished to flee from the effects of the revolution at home. Their country had long been convulsed by internal strife, and when Harald the "Fair-haired" had finally emerged as supreme ruler, a new order was superimposed on his country. The old odal system was abolished; and in its place was established a sort of feudal ownership, which the freedom-loving Norseman could never abide. Rather than relinquish the conception of absolute right to the soil which they cultivated, bands of them left their native shores and took up their abode on islands off the North and West of Scotland.

Using these as their base, they returned in hordes to plunder their old homes; and, according to the Ynglinga Saga, written about 1200, "they infested the coasts of Norway during the summer months, doing considerable damage to the country." Their depredations had become so frequent, and disastrous, that Harald "went out with an army every summer, but when the Vikings perceived his army they always fled, and took refuge in the open sea. The king, becoming dissatisfied with these expeditions, followed the Vikings one summer with his army westwards over the sea. He fought many battles, in most of which he was victorious. He put to death the chiefs of the pirates, and he made indiscriminate slaughter of their followers."

It would seem, however, that the effects of this conquest were but short-lived; for no sooner had he returned home than fresh incursions took place, and, having despatched Ketill Flatnose to quell the insurgents, it appears that the viceroy revolted, and made common cause with the men of the isles. They made him their king, "and, during his life, he was master of the Hebrides." This would seem to point to an amalgamation of the Norsemen with the native race, and the suggestion is supported by the record which says that, in 907, "the men of Lochlann had many a Goidelic foster son." This mixed race, the Gallgael, as they were called, are described as "a restless and ungovernable people" in the Norse sagas; but they must have been reconciled to the Norwegian sway again, for, according to an Irish account of the Battle of Clontarf, in 1014, men from Skye (Sgithidh) fought in the ranks of the Norse against Brian Boru, the Irish King. Less than 100 years after this, however, in 1102, their old disaffection broke out afresh, culminating in the killing of Ingemund, the Norse viceroy. A terrible revenge was exacted of the Hebrideans by

Magnus Barelegs, King of Norway. In the Magnus' saga, it is stated that as soon as the King came to the Hebrides "he commenced to burn their habitations—he killed the people and pillaged wherever he went. . . . Then he made war on Skidi," and his skald thus recounts his prowess:

> "The peasant lost his lands and life
> Who dared to bide the Norseman's strife.
> The hungry battle-birds were filled
> In Skye, with blood of foemen killed;
> And wolves on Tiree's lonely shore
> Dyed red their hairy jaws in gore."

Having completed his conquest, Magnus appointed Olave the Red as his viceroy; and he is designated in history, "King of Man." During his reign, an insurrection broke out in Skye in 1140, but, with the support of the great Somerled, who in that year married his daughter, Olave succeeded in restoring order. In the "MS. History" of Clan Donald, by Hugh MacDonald, the sennachie of Sleat, we read: "Olay and Somerled killed MacLier, who possessed Strath in the Isle of Skye. They killed Godfrey Du by putting out his eyes, which was done by the hermit MacPoke, because Godfrey Du had killed his father formerly. Olay, surnamed the Red, killed MacNicoll in Uist likewise."

On the death of Olave, Somerled appears to have established himself as independent ruler over all the isles of the Hebrides, from Lewis to Man, together with the mainland of Argyll; and he maintained sway over his scattered domains for about six years, until he was murdered, in 1164, at Inchinnan, in Renfrewshire. Then his brother-in-law, Godfrey Dubh, or the Black, who had been forced to flee to Norway during the rule of Somerled, returned, and he resumed possession of Skye, and the other isles of the west, as the vassal of the Norse king. From that time, for about a century, very few facts are found in the records which throw light on the history of Skye until the fateful year 1263.

End of Norse Sway.

As might be expected, the inhabitants of Innsegall, as the Hebrides were called, were then seldom at peace with their neighbours on the mainland of Scotland; and the rulers of the latter were pleased to connive at the ruthless methods of retaliation which their vassals practised on the "foreigners."

Now there arose in Scotland an ardent patriot and loyal supporter of the king, in the person of Ferchar Macintaggart of Ross, the son of the Red Priest of Applecross. This man, of restless energy and abounding resource, had already proved himself of great value to the Scottish king, Alexander II., in quelling dangerous tumults, both in Moray and in Galloway, and he seems to have been a veritable "thorn in the flesh" to the men of Skye. He was assisted by Kermac MacMaghan (? Matheson), so says an old account, "against the Norse, especially those of Skie." His depredations on that unhappy isle were frequent and ruthless, for, according to the Norse sagas, "he sacked villages, desecrated churches, and his men, in wanton fury, raised the children on the point of their spears, and shook them until they fell to the ground." At length Olave the Black, King of Man and the Isles, appealed to his superior; and on 15th July, 1263, Haco, King of Norway, sailed from Bergen with a fleet of 120 ships, "bent on the conquest of the whole of Scotland." The great Armada anchored at Kyleakin (Haco's Strait), and there was joined by the barons of the isles, and almost all the princes of the house of Somerled. Resuming the voyage, they sailed southwards by the isles to their defeat at Largs, in August, 1263, when the Hebrides were finally lost to Norway. In 1266 they were ceded to Scotland by the treaty of Perth; and Skye was added to the territory of the Lord of the Isles.

In the North of Skye there is current a tradition to the effect that some years after this an extensive raid was made by the Norsemen on the district of Trotarnish. Their fleet was anchored in Score Bay, but so resolutely did the natives acquit themselves that, at the Battle of Blar na Buailte, the invaders betook themselves to their galleys, with the exception of one leader, Arco Bronmhor, and a contingent, who, in the stress of pursuit, made for the island in Loch Chalum Chille, where they defied all efforts to dislodge them. In order to rid the land of such unwelcome intruders, the Lord of the Isles commissioned a certain MacSween, a man of prowess and acumen, to go against Arco; and he promised him the district of Braes as his reward, if successful. So skilfully, however, had the Norseman fortified his position, that MacSween's assaults were easily repulsed; and, as his best laid stratagems proved unavailing, the Skyeman resorted to other forms of artifice. Disguising himself as a bard, he obtained access to the isle, and was entertained by Arco, as was due to a member of that privileged order. He regaled his host with song and story, a fare that seems at length to have sated the adipose Arco, for the sennachie says that "he fell fast asleep"; and MacSween saw to it that he never woke again. He carried the foreigner's head in the folds of his plaid to his patron at Duntulm, and was duly rewarded by being made tacksman of the Braes of Trotarnish.

CHAPTER II.

SOCIAL HISTORY.

Religion and Culture.

THE Druidic forms of worship prevailed in Skye, as elsewhere, before the advent of Christianity; and, although certain aspects of it were naturally repugnant to the new faith, such was the beauty of its ethic, relevant to particular lines of conduct, that much of it was retained, and cherished, by the early Christian Church. We catch faint echoes of the lofty morality of the ancient race in various accounts, as in the reference to the conversion of Artbranan in Adamnan's "Life of St. Columba," where we read: "A pagan, an ancient man, whose conduct has been blameless throughout life." Again, in "The Dialogues of the Ancients," a compilation of the eleventh century, and characterised mayhap by a reaction against the strict monastic code, and methods of thought that were then in vogue, there is a scene where St. Patrick interviews Ossian. The former declares that the Feinn must be in Hell, as they died without knowledge of Christ—a statement which Ossian, with impressive pathos and splendid piety, counters thus: "Fionn, King of the Fenians, the generous one, was without blemish! All the qualities that you and your clerics say are according to the rule of the King of the stars, Fionn's Fenians had them all; and if they are in pain, great would be the shame, for if God Himself would be in bonds, my chief would fight on his behalf. Fionn never suffered any one to be in pain or difficulty, and can his doom be in Hell, in the house of cold?"

Here are no notions of vindictiveness towards their fellow-men; nothing but the thought of sympathy and ready helpfulness. "O Oscar, bend the strong in arms, but spare the feeble hand," is a characteristic injunction, and whether we believe in the authenticity of Ossian or not, we are forced to admit that there is a genuine feature of the race embodied in the saying ascribed to him: "Within this bosom there is a voice. It bids Ossian help the helpless in their hour of need." The readiness with which they went to the aid of those in distress is exemplified in the proverb, "Ge fagus clach do'n làr, is faisge na sin cobhair Choibhe" (Though near is stone to earth, nearer than that is the help of the Druid); and even the writers of Greece and Rome, who mention them, are constrained to pay deference to their sense of chivalry, and their practice of hospitality. The stranger was always welcome to partake of whatever entertainment they could afford, and they never closed the door at night without looking around in expectation of a visitor. "The red oak is ablaze; the spire of its flame is on high. The traveller sees its light on the dusky heath, as night spreads around him her raven wings. He sees it, and is glad. 'There,' says he, to his companion, 'we shall pass the night. The door of Fionn is always open, and the name of his hall is the stranger's home.'"

And the classic writers were also careful to ascribe to them the qualities of display and of pugnacity; but if the sublimated ideals of the age, transmitted to us in their proverbs, mean anything, their tenour seems to attest quite the contrary. "Fuil mo nairmh cha d' iarras riamh na 'm bu mhiann leis triall an sìth" (Blood of foeman ne'er was sought if he chose to part in peace); and "Cha deachaidh neach riamh dubhach bho Fhionn" (None ever went sad from Fingal). These, and many others of similar import, show that that ancient race was fully imbued with the best ideals of a noble culture; and if individuals did, on occasion, fall short in their ordinary conduct, there was surely hope for a people that could apprehend such lofty inspirations. "If the Celt were made of the same materials as the Greek or the Roman," once declared a famous writer, "his moral code should certainly have made him a better man, and a greater hero." And there can be no doubt it was because of the clean soil it found ready to its hand that the Columban Church was able to nurture an ideal of Christian perfection which is not paralleled by any other branch of that faith.

St. Columba visited Skye about 585, and, according to Adamnan, "he stayed for some days there." He was the patron saint of the northern part of the island, and his influence is manifest in the prevalence of places that bear his name. The Rev. Donald MacQueen, the cicerone of Dr. Johnson, says there were thirty places of worship in Trotarnish, "besides many monasteries," dedicated to the saint. It is noteworthy that Portree Bay was anciently called St. Columba's Loch, and a tidal island in the inner bay, off the shore of the township of Penifieler, is still called "Eilean Chalum Chille"; and on it are found indications of an ancient building, which is held to have been a chapel of the early Church.

In the north of Skye, at Monkstadt (Monk's Steading), there is another Loch Chalum Chille, which was drained, after two previous attempts, in the year 1824. Here are found the remains of a hamlet of Columban coenobium, consisting of beehive dwellings of dry stone, and a "chapel," which, from the fact that it is built with mortar, may belong to a later period. A writer of the seventeenth century describes these ruins as consisting of a "tower and a town."

Again, on an island at the head of Loch Snizort are the ruins of another church, which the Rev. Malcolm MacLeod, who wrote the "Old Statistical Account" for the parish, says "had in all probability once been the metropolitan church of Skye"; and, among other places, chapels on Troday, and on Fladda Chuain, were dedicated to St. Columba.

In the "Life of St. Columba," by Adamnan, there occur two passages which refer to the sojourn of the saint in Skye. In one, mention is made of an encounter with a "huge wild boar pursued by hounds," and the miraculous killing of the animal "by the efficacy of the words" of the saint. In the other, which is worthy of being quoted in full, Adamnan says: "One day, as the saint was staying for some days in the island of Skye, he struck the seashore with his staff and said to his attendants, 'Strange, my children, this day a pagan, an ancient man, whose conduct has been blameless throughout life, will receive baptism, die, and be buried, on this spot'; and, lo! about an hour after, a boat came into the harbour, on whose prow sat a decrepit old man, the chief of the Geona Cohort. Two young men took him out of the boat, and brought him before the saint. After being instructed by the saint through an interpreter, the old man believed, and was baptised; and when the sacrament was administered, he died on the same spot after the saint's prediction; and his companions buried him there, raising a heap of stones over his grave (congesto lapidum acervo). The cairn may still be seen on the sea coast, and the river, in which he was baptised, is called to this day by the inhabitants, Dobur Artbranani."

Just as Columba was the patron saint of the north of Skye, so Maelruba was of the southern and central portions of the island. According to Tighernac, he founded a church at Applecross in 673; and thence he carried the torch of Christianity throughout the Highlands and the Isles. There are sites of chapels dedicated to him at Ashig, Kilmaree, and Eynort; and the 25th August was observed at Broadford for many centuries as the festival of Maol Ruadh. Although there appears to be no record of it, we cannot doubt that he carried his prosleytysing zeal in person to Skye, as elsewhere, during his long ministry of forty-nine years.

The other representatives of the early church whose names are commemorated in Skye are:—Maol Luag, the bishop of Lismore, where he died in 592, and to whom chapels have been dedicated both in the north of Trotarnish and in the island of Raasay; St. Congan, or Comghan, has his name enshrined in ruined chapels in Glendale, in Strath, and at Trumpan in Waternish; whilst other names are Talorgan, whose "cell" was in Beal, near Portree, of old, Kiltalorgan, and now corrupted into Kiltaraglen; St. Martin, in Kilmartin; St. Donan, in Kildonan; St. Assynt, the patron saint of Bracadale, in the chapel at Caroy; St. Turos' Chapel was on Isle Altavaig, in Staffin, which Martin describes as "a little old chapel"; and, finally, St. Clement's name is perpetuated in Tobar Chliamain, a chalybeate well, in the district of Strath.

Many incidents go to show that the Columban clergy looked to Ireland for guidance, and support; and it is interesting to note that when that keen controversy was raging, which culminated at the Synod of Whitby, in 664, in rending the early church in twain, it is said Colman and the Scots clergy left the Roman section and removed to Ireland "accompanied by the sons of Gartnaidh, who took with them the Columban clergy of Skye, and returned two years afterwards."

The coming of the Norse administered a severe blow to Christianity. Many of the monasteries were pillaged, their MSS. scattered far and wide wherever the guardian monks could find refuge, and in the dispersal numerous priceless records must have been for ever lost. In the "Book of Leinster" it is stated, in effect, that the writings of the "few men of learning" who had survived the Norse invasions were burned by the plunderers; while Keating says that neither bard nor musician pursued his wonted calling in the land during the sway of the Norsemen. But there is ample evidence to show that the accounts of atrocities which have come down to us have, in many cases, been exaggerated by the monks, and that the Norse were not altogether the blood-thirsty ghouls the former would have us believe them to be. For we must not forget that the Norse themselves possessed numerous sagas and wonderful eddas, which, for sublimity of conception, chastity of taste, and wealth of imagery, mark them out as clearly no less inferior in culture to any other contemporary race in Europe. They were intensely fond of the eddas, which their scalds composed, and sang; and their runic form of writing is supposed by some to date back to within a century of the opening of the Christian era.

Those of the Norse who came in 875 would, of course, be too eager to solicit the help of their hosts in the isles to interfere much in the internal affairs of the latter. It is true that widespread plunderings were committed during the expeditions of Harald "The Fairhaired" and Magnus "Barelegs," but in the "Magnus' Saga," written, it must be admitted, when the Norse had become Christian, we find that the writer is very careful to mention that no sacrilege was done by the Norse King, especially when he came to Holy Isle (Iona). "Magnus gave quarter and peace to all men that were there, and to the property of everybody"; and, again, when in 1263 an appeal was sent to the Norse King, Haco, to succour the islanders from the cruelty of the men of the mainland of Scotland, it is imputed that the latter "desecrated churches."

Indeed, it would seem that the new religion had early made many converts among the Norse who had settled in the Isles, for we are told that the more recalcitrant spirits among them had grown so disgusted with the tenets of the Christian faith that they left the Western Isles and went to reside in Iceland, for the writer of the saga says: "Ketill, son of Bjorn, would not abide there (the Western Isles), because he saw they had another troth; and no wise manly it seemed to him that they had cast off the faith that their kin had held."

There can be no doubt that the Norse had made some contribution to the Christian faith, and many suggest, with much justification, that it is probably through this channel that we have the conception of a *cold* hell in the oldest stratum of that belief.

> "'S mairg a roghnaicheas ifrionn fhuar
> 'S gur h-i uamh nan droighean gheur.
> 'S beag orm ifrionn fhuar fhliuch
> Aite bithbhuan is searbh deoch."

The word "ifrionn" is, of course, the Latin "infernum," showing it to have been introduced by the early Christians; and, indeed, it was held by such an eminent authority as Dr. George Henderson that a belief in hell is wholly absent from the religion of the Gaels in pre-Christian times.

Customs.

At early dawn on Latha Bealltuinn (May Day) every community was in commotion, and cattle and sheep were rounded up and driven to the vicinity of the homes. Before noon all domestic fires were extinguished, according to the time-honoured custom, and care was taken that no one carried iron about his person. Thereafter bands of men, and animals, might be seen converging on some conspicuous hill in the neighbourhood, where two heaps of wood lay piled in close proximity to one another.

When the company arrived there, a bull was sacrificed, and portions of the carcase were placed on each pile. At the same time relays of men might be observed vigorously engaged in rubbing together two pieces of the sacred hazel (calltuinn) until the friction should generate fire. The new flame was immediately applied to the heaps of wood; and when it had taken a firm hold, cattle, sheep, and other domesticated animals were driven between the fires, so that the whiffs of sacred smoke, which they inhaled, might cure those affected with disease, and confer immunity on all, during the ensuing year.

After the performance of that rite, several youths, carrying flambeaux of dried sedge, encircled sunwise the herds, to ensure fertility, and procure freedom from the evils of witchcraft. Finally, with torches still burning, they approached their homes; and, after they had walked round the fields of growing crops once, and three times engirdled their dwellings, they entered, and, with the consecrated brand, kindled a fire on their own hearths, which was not allowed to die out until the ceremony was to be repeated in the following year.

Meanwhile the elders of the tribe remained behind, and on the hill top offerings were made to the enemies of the flocks—the foxes, the eagles, and the storms—to desist their ravages. One of the fathers reverently placed such foods as butter, cheese, eggs, and milk on a hollow stone at the scene of the celebration, and, uttering an incantation, he threw pieces of bread over his left shoulder, invoking the floods and the storms to be favourable to corn and pasture, and the beasts and birds of prey to spare the lambs and the kids.

According to Martin Martin, the need fire, or tein eiginn, as the sacred fire was called, was withheld from the heads of families until tithes had been paid, and other ecclesiastical obligations had been duly discharged; and he adds that malefactors suffered for their crimes by being burned in the fires of Beltane.

LAND—(TENURE AND DIVISIONS).

The Celtic system of land tenure was entirely different from the Teutonic, in that in the latter all rights in the land were vested in a superior; whereas in the former the tuath, or the clan, was the virtual owner. It has been observed that this, indeed, was one of the outstanding features of the law that governed property in the early Celtic tribe; and another was the principle of gavelkind, whereby the privilege of proprietorship was divided equally among all the male offspring, even the illegitimates having their claims sustained; but females were stringently precluded from the rights of succession.

Now, it has already been shown that the laws governing the possession of land in Scandinavia were closely allied to those that obtained in the north and west of Scotland; so that when the Norseman migrated to the west, taking with him his infixed notions of odal, or freehold, occupancy of land, his presence helped but to intensify the belief of the aboriginal inhabitant that the soil he cultivated was his own by absolute right; and the late Professor Mackinnon of Edinburgh was wont to point to this concept as the reason why the modern Hebridean crofter considers the plot whereon he resides as inalienably his own.

It is thus clear that the coming of the Norse to the Isles did nothing to upset the system of land tenure that prevailed there in the earliest times. The ownership lay with the community as a whole, and certain divisions were made when a family desired to have its own portion separated from that of another.

Among the Picts, and the Gaels of Dalriada, the principal divisions were the "baile" (township) and the davoch; and although the latter name does not now occur in Skye, though it was once common enough, the former is frequently met with. These portions were approximately equal; and it would appear they were roughly co-extensive with the division called "unga," or "tirunga," which we owe to the Norse. As the name indicates, an ounce of silver, or twenty pennies, was paid to the jarl by way of scat, or tribute, for such lands; while a tax of one penny was levied on every homestead.

The word "unga" occurs in at least two place-names in Skye, as Hungladder and Ungnacille.

Other land measures introduced by the Norse were "Peighinn," or penny land, and its several multiples and sub-divisions—Glaspheighinn, Lethpheighinn, Feorling, and Merkland, all of which are found more or less disguised in the place-names of the northern and central portions of the island.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

In addition to his other functions, the Druid of Celtic times executed the offices both of a law-giver and of judge. Under the regime of the Norse, his authority was transferred to the jarl, who was responsible for maintenance of order in his own domain. The jurisdiction of that nobleman was itself later delegated to another functionary, a sheriff, and about the beginning of the thirteenth century we find that a certain Paul Balkeson was acting in that capacity in Skye. He was a man of very great influence, owning Harris, North Uist, Sleat, Trotarnish, Waternish, and Snizort; and it was probably he who is mentioned as one of the chief opponents of the great Somerled, when the latter sought, with the connivance of Thorfinn, to establish his son Dugall as King of the Isles, in opposition to the tyrant Godfrey, or Godred, the Black. Although Paul was virtually a petty ruler in Skye, he was nominally responsible to the King of Norway. He seems to have lived to a great age, for, according to the sagas, he was murdered about the year 1230, some say by putting him first to the torture, then commonly practised in the case of criminals, of gouging out his eyes.

General Conditions (Dress, etc.).

As one might expect of such a race, we find that they were adventurous sailors, even in early times completing long voyages to places as remote as the Mediterranean. They imported weapons, richly ornamented, costly cloth, and jewellery; for they were inordinately fond of display.

Their women folk were highly skilled in the use of vegetable dyes, and were thus able to produce that picturesque apparel whose gorgeous colourings so readily won the admiration of foreigners. The Breacan-feile (tartan kilt and upper garment combined) was apparently the dress worn by the men, for we read in the Magnus' Saga (c. 1093): "When King Magnus came from his western expedition, he adopted those manners in dress which were in use in the western countries, and likewise many of his followers, so that they went about barelegged, having short kyrtles and upper garments, and therefore many men called him 'Barelegged.'"

CHAPTER III.

FAMILY HISTORY.

THE MACLEODS.

THEIR ORIGIN.

THERE appears to be as much uncertainty about the origin of the MacLeods as there is about the early history of the island on which that clan has shed so brilliant a lustre. There are those who would go so far as to suggest that their reputed ancestor, Leot, or Leod, was not even a historical personage, but merely the eponym of the tribe; while among those who maintain his actual existence there is much diversity of opinion regarding his parentage, and the place of his nativity.

Some would have him to be one of the many sons of Thorfinn, that unscrupulous and able leader who was viceroy when the Norse sway was at the apex of its power in the Highlands; but the main trend of opinion follows the traditional account, which states that Leot was the son of Olave the Black, King of Man; and Canon R. C. MacLeod of MacLeod, and Alexander MacKenzie, "The Clans' Historian," hold the same view.

As is well known, that indefatigable worker, William F. Skene, would seem to discredit the belief in the Norse origin of the MacLeods; for he declares that "the accepted authority for this, namely, the 'Chronicle of Man,' makes no mention of their Norse origin," but in this, he is opposed by a powerful consensus of opinion. Though the ancient records do not help us much in our search for the place of origin of this clan, the name itself, the traditions of the race, and, above all, the bards, point to Norway as its ancestral home. Thus Màiri ni'n Alasdair Ruaidh often alludes to it. In one of her numerous pæans in praise of her illustrious patron, Sir Norman of Bernera, she says:

"Fuil dhìreach Righ Lochluinn
B'e sud toiseach do sheanachais,"

which, in its literal rendering, is:

The direct blood of the Norse king,
That was the beginning of your tale.

And, again:

"Lochluinnich threun, toiseach do sgeuil,
Sliochd solta bho fhreumh Mhànuis";

while in "The Fairy Lullaby" we have the couplet:

"Siol nan Leodach, nan lann, 's nan lùireach,
B'e Lochluinn dùthchas do shinnsir."
Seed of Leod, of the weapons, and coats of mail,
Norway was the native land of your ancestry.

Further, we find the MacLeods referred to as:

"Sliochd Olghair is Ochraidh,
O bhaile na Boirbhe" (*Bergen*);

And in an elegy by another to Sir Norman of Bernera, he is referred to as "Ua Mhanuis o' mhúr Manuinn," or "The offspring of Manus from the walls of Man."

Donald MacLeod (Do'ull nan Oran), in his "Smeòrach," in reference to their origin, says:

"Cha b'i crionach liath no mosgan,
Bho'n a shiolaich treud an fhortainn;
Ach fiodh miath, gun mhiar, gun socadh,
Geal mar ghrian, bho bhian Righ Lochluinn."

LEOD—

The accredited progenitor of the MacLeods, was the son of Olave the Black, who, by the help of Paul Balkeson, Sheriff of Skye, succeeded to Man, and the Western Isles, in 1223. Olave was married to Christina, daughter of Farquhar, Earl of Ross. He died about 1237; and is probably the "Ollaghair nan lann, thogadh sròlaibh ri crann" referred to by Màiri ni'n Alasdair Ruaidh, the bardess of Dunvegan. His son Leod, who was born about the beginning of the thirteenth century, entered the bonds of fosterage in his early youth with Balkeson, the kinglet of the northern isles, and on the latter's death fell heir to all his lands. We read that "Paul, who was lord of Skye as well as sheriff, and a man of the greatest power and authority of any in those parts, had been a constant friend of Leod in all his dangers and distresses." Hence it happened that Leod was destined to come into possession of an extensive domain, embracing Uist and Harris, ceded to him on the death of Paul, the sheriff; Lewis, from his father; Glenelg, from his grandfather, the Earl of Ross; while, by his marriage, about 1220, with the only daughter of a Norse potentate named MacHarold (MacRaild), he secured Duirinish, Bracadale, Minginish, Lyndale, and much of Trotarnish. Whether he came into possession of this portion of Skye by right of dowry, or, as some say, by treachery, is not clearly known.

Leod died about 1280, and he was buried in Iona, where six successive chiefs of the clan found a last resting-place after him.

Leod's father-in-law, MacRaild, was a Norse noble, whose seat is traditionally said to have been on the site of the present Castle of Dunvegan. He is referred to in the older writings as MacRaild Armunn, the cognomen signifying his office of chamberlain or tax-gatherer to the Norse jarl.

By his marriage with the daughter of MacRaild, Leod had two sons, Norman (Tormad) and Harold (Torquil). From the latter, the Lewis branch of the MacLeods derive the patronymic Siol Thorcuil; while the descendants of the former, despite Gregory's averment, are seldom referred to as Siol Thormaid, but Siol Leòid. The appellation, Siol Thormaid, occurs once in the works of the bards, when Màiri ni'n Alasdair Ruaidh calls them "Siol Thormaid nan sgiath."

When the patrimony was divided between the brothers, of whom Norman was the older, according to Canon MacLeod, that part of Skye called Waternish was, for some reason or other, granted by Norman to his brother Torquil; and it remained in the family of the latter for several centuries. Torquil held the islands of Raasay and Rona, but not by cession from Norman.

NORMAN, THE FIRST CHIEF.

Norman,- the first chief of the MacLeods of Skye, assumed power about the year 1280. It would appear that he held part of his lands under the Earl of Ross, for we find that King Robert the Bruce assigned the island of Skye to that nobleman, as part of his dominion, in the year 1309; while Glenelg was ceded to Randolf, Earl of Moray, and it was held by him from 1307 until 1314.

During the chiefship of Norman, Scotland was engaged in a life-and-death struggle with England in order to preserve her freedom. As is well known, most of the Highland clans took part in the Battle of Bannockburn; and it has been stated that between 5,000 and 10,000 islesmen fought on that fateful day. Originally placed in the rear of the Scottish army, they were sent at the very commencement of the battle to reinforce Edward Bruce on the right.

It has not been specifically mentioned that the MacLeods of Skye were present; and, accordingly, many writers have concluded that they did not take part in that epoch-making event. We find, however, that it is definitely stated in the "MS. History of the MacLeods" that their chief was at Bannockburn; and Canon MacLeod unhesitatingly adopts that view.

By all accounts, Norman seems to have been a man of great prowess, tall, of fine address, and picturesque appearance. His bushy beard swept his ample breast, and it was so long that it was ordinarily "tucked under his girdle."

In the "M.S. History of the MacLeods" he is said to have been married to Christina, daughter of Lovat, whereas Mackenzie, in his "History of the MacLeods," says his wife was Fingala MacCrotan, the daughter of an Irish chief. He had three sons, Malcolm, his successor; Leod, who followed Edward Bruce to Ireland, where he was killed, and Godfrey, who was dedicated to the church, and became a monk.

For some time this chief held the office of Sheriff of Skye. He died at Pabay, his seat in Harris, about the year 1320; and he was buried in Iona. It is noteworthy that he is the "Torquil" who figures in Scott's "Lord of the Isles."

MALCOLM, THE SECOND CHIEF.

Malcolm succeeded his father as chief about the year 1320, and it appears he was not yet reinstated in the family patrimony of Glenelg, as that land was then held by the Bissets. During his suzerainty, Scotland was convulsed by civil strife between the faction of Edward Balliol and that of David Bruce; and the subtlest artifices and intrigues were practised by both parties in order to win the adherence of prominent Highland chiefs.

Hence it happened that, in 1335, Skye was conferred by Balliol on John, First Lord of the Isles; and, in the following year, the charter was confirmed by Edward III. of England, who championed the cause of Balliol for his own ends. But when

David Bruce had been once more restored to his kingdom, he annulled the charter of Edward, and he gave the island to the Earl of Ross. This was in 1344; but by his marriage with the daughter of the Earl of Ross, the Lord of the Isles succeeded in adding Skye to his dominions.

In order to secure the allegiance of Malcolm, the Chief of the MacLeods, David granted him two-thirds of Glenelg in the year 1343. In the deed is a clause to the effect that he was to hold that portion of Glenelg subject to his provision of a galley of twenty-six oars, to be maintained by him, for the king's service whenever it was required.

This chief is reputed to have been one of the most famous heroes of his age; and the so-called "Drinking Horn of Rory Mor" is still preserved in Dunvegan as a memento to his daring and his great strength. The traditionary accounts of the origin of this interesting relic are many and varied; but the one that commands the principal place in popular favour is perhaps the following:—

As Malcolm was one day passing alone through the wilds of Ratagan, in Glenelg, on his way home from the district of Beauly, he was assailed by a wild bull, "the terror and the scourge of the inhabitants." The plucky chief grappled with the ferocious brute; and so fierce was the combat that one of the horns of the animal was wrenched clean off in the unyielding grip of the puissant chief. Hence, it is said, are derived the crest of the MacLeods, which is a bull's head, and their motto, "Hold Fast."

In later years this athletic chief became very corpulent; and, being a man of kindly disposition, he is often referred to as "Calum Reamhar Math" (Malcolm, the fat, and the good). He died in the Castle of Stornoway about the year 1360, and was buried in Iona. He was married to a daughter of the Earl of Mar, by whom he had several sons, and, at least, one daughter. The last, whose name was Margaret, was married to John Bethune, an ancestor of the famous physicians of Skye. His third son, Murdo, was the progenitor of the MacLeods of Gesto, whence the name of this branch is "Clann 'ic Mhurchaidh." This Murdo was married to the daughter of a noted warrior in Skye, named Gillies, and he acquired the lands of Gesto as part of his wife's dowry.

It is about this time that a man of forceful personality begins to attract our attention for the prominent part he played on the stage of Scottish history. He is John of Islay, the son of Angus Og, who had rendered such effective aid to Bruce during the struggle for national freedom. "The Lord of the Isles," as John was now called, had greatly enhanced his power by his marriage with the heiress, Amie Macruairi; but his unbridled ambition continued to soar, and, having attained his object by this marriage, he sought a divorce in order that he might marry the daughter of the High Steward of Scotland; and his aims were ultimately realised. The Steward soon afterwards ascended the throne as Robert II. of Scotland.

An infirm and vacillating king gave a man of John's disposition just the opportunity he desired. So arrogant and defiant had he shown himself in the reign of David II., that the king, after many rebuffs, had at length succeeded in persuading his unruly subject to appear at Inverness, there to tender his allegiance, and to give hostages for his future behaviour. This was in the year 1369. John acceded to the royal demands. Skye was surrendered to the king, only to be granted anew to the aspiring lord, who, on the death of David, took every advantage of his prestige to consolidate his power and to extend his dominions. From henceforth, the Lords of the Isles began to regard themselves as independent kinglets, who had inherited the rights of the Norse jarls. Accordingly, while they were willing to do homage to the Scottish kings for their possessions on the mainland, they persistently refused to own allegiance for their dominions in the Isles. Thus it happened that, according to the power of the central authority, the Western Isles suffered many vicissitudes, and we find that Skye experienced several changes in ownership. We have seen that it had been granted to John, the first Lord of the Isles, in 1369, while, in 1382, it was given to Alexander Stewart, Earl of Buchan, by King Robert II.

John, Third Chief of MacLeod.

Throughout this troublous time, the chiefship of the MacLeods was vested in John, the third of his line. He succeeded his father in 1360; and was the leader of his clan until his death in 1392.

He was a man of uncontrollable temper; and tales of his fiendish ferocity are often related. Having heard that two of his daughters were about to be married to two brothers, sons of one of his vassals, MacQueen of Roag, he sought to nullify the betrothals; but finding the contracting parties still defiant, he ordered the former to be buried alive in the dungeon of the castle; and, having seized the latter, he had them flogged so savagely "that there was scarcely a spark of life left in them" when they were hurled from a precipice to be drowned in a stormy sea.

On another occasion, during a hunt in Harris, he noticed that an albino stag, which he wished to be reserved for his own bow and hounds, had been killed by one of his retainers. He commanded the hapless huntsman to be brought before him, to be disembowelled on the spot by the antlers of the very deer that he had so unwittingly slain. Such an atrocious act could not be allowed to go unavenged; and the sept of the murdered man stealthily attacked the MacLeods as they were returning to Skye. As the chief was stepping aboard his galley, an arrow sped through the air, striking him in the back of the head, and mortally wounding him, so that he fell between the boat and the landing-stage. In the confusion that ensued, the boat, occupied by his wife and daughters, was left untended, and it began to drift before a strong westerly wind. It was driven eastwards across the Minch until it reached Idrigil, in Duirinish, where it was pounded to pieces on " The Maidens," and all its occupants were drowned.

Long before that time the MacLeods had succeeded in staying the onslaught of their assailants, whom they eventually overwhelmed. Their victory was due, primarily, to the gallantry and the leadership of the second son of the chief, a man named William, who, as he had been educated for the Church, is, in consequence, known as William "Cléireach," or "The Cleric."

WILLIAM CLEIREACH, FOURTH CHIEF.

William's older brother, Malcolm, was killed in Lewis, whither he had gone to seek the hand of a daughter of the chief of that island. He quarrelled with a brother of the young lady, and in the fray both combatants were mortally wounded.

Although he had been bred for the Church, William proved himself to be a mighty warrior, who, by his prowess, and his generalship, had raised the name of his clan to a position of high prestige. He had no sooner been appointed chief than he gathered his men, and set off for Easter Ross in order, it is said, that he might avenge an insult he had received there from the Frasers in his youth. Having wreaked his vengeance on that clan in several successful encounters, he raided their lands far and near, and drove an immense booty to Skye. At Harlosh, in the district of Vatten, the cattle were slaughtered; and the place is known to this day as "Bun a' Sgamhaidh," or "The place of refuse." This was in the year 1393.

Two years later an incident occurred in which he was destined further to enhance his own fame, and the name of his clan. At that time a powerful personality was dominating the north and the west, where he was endeavouring to establish a Celtic dynasty. This was Donald, the son of John, first Lord of the Isles, and of Margaret Stewart, the daughter of Robert II. In order to placate his older half-brothers, whose power and possessions he had usurped, Donald conspired, among other designs, to wrench his lands in Skye from the chief of the MacLeods, and to confer them on one of his own brothers. At that time the island of Skye formed part of the earldom of Ross, and Donald could now assert his claims with the greater confidence, for he had become affianced to Lady Mary Lesley, who was Countess of Ross in her own right.

But the Chief of MacLeod was not the man to surrender tamely to any usurping lord; and he determined to resist this attempt at dispossession by every means in his power.

Meanwhile Donald despatched a strong force, under his brother, the redoubtable Alasdair Carach, to invade Skye. Having evaded the vigilance of MacAskill of Ru 'n Dunain, constable of Dun Sgathaich, and hereditary coast-watcher of the MacLeods, the invaders effected a landing at Eynort, in Minginish. Thence they rapidly made for the east, by Carbost and Drynoch, leaving a wide trail of devastation behind them.

Their progress was soon, however, to suffer an abrupt set-back; for, at the head of Loch Sligachan, they were encountered by a powerful body of the MacLeods. Here a furious battle was waged, and the natives acquitted themselves with such bravery, and skill, that their opponents were thrown into hopeless confusion, which soon developed into a rout. The pursuit was ruthlessly maintained by the stout-hearted islanders all the way back to the shores of Loch Eynort, where a cruel fate awaited the panic-stricken fugitives. On their arrival there, they discovered that their galleys had been taken possession of by the MacCaskills, who had them moored some distance out to sea. Seeing that escape was now impossible, they fled hither and thither in utter despair, only to be cut to pieces by their relentless foes. It is said that not a soul of them escaped that day of carnage; and, according to the "MS. History of the MacLeods of Dunvegan," the heads of the slain were collected, and numbered, and despatched as trophies to be retained in the custody of the warder of Dunvegan Castle. It is stated by the same authority that the spoil was divided at Creag an Fheannaidh, or "The Rock of the Flaying," which some identify with the "Bloody Stone" in Harta Corrie.

Now, although the victory is rightly attributed to the MacLeods, it is questionable if the defeat was such a signal one as the "M.S. History" of that clan, and the traditions of the island, would have us believe. The Battle of Sligachan was fought in 1395, and we know that the leader of the invading army, Alasdair Carach, was living in 1398, for in the chartulry of Moray is a document of that date wherein he is described as "Magnificus vir et potens Alexander, Dominus de Lochaber." He was present at Harlaw in 1411, and he must have been living in 1431, for, in that year, his estates were forfeited for the part he took in the insurrection of Donald Balloch.

And what is more, it is clear that the creatures of Donald of the Isles had succeeded about this time in obtaining a temporary footing in Skye, whether forcibly or by agreement cannot now be said. In any case, Godfrey, an older half-brother of Donald, occupied Sleat, and lived in Dun Sgathaich from 1389 until 1401, and, according to Hugh MacDonald, the sennachie of Sleat, "the country of Trotternish in Skye" was refused by Alasdair Carach, as "he preferred to it the forest lands of Lochaber." Here we have the beginning of the suzerainty of the MacDonalds in Skye, a suzerainty that sixty years hence was to become permanent in the island, and was destined to be the cause of never-ending disputes and feuds with the MacLeods, who for several centuries continued to assert their right over the lands which the MacDonalds came to occupy.

After the Battle of Sligachan, the puissant and amiable chief of the MacLeods seems to have lived in peace for the rest of his days; and it seems like the irony of a frolicsome fate that this warrior chief, who had been snatched from a life of celibacy by the accident of an older brother's death, should have left behind him a numerous progeny of illegitimate children.

Of his sons by wedlock, with the daughter of MacLean of Lochbuy, the records tell of three, namely:—John, his heir; Norman, whose son, Alasdair Ruadh, was styled of St. Kilda, of which branch the most illustrious scion was the bardess Màiri Ni'n Alasdair Ruaidh; and George, who settled in France. The chief died suddenly, while yet a comparatively young man, at Castle Camus, in Sleat, in the year 1402, leaving as his heir a lad of the tender age of ten. That was Ian Borb (John the Truculent), the fifth chief.

Owing to the youth of the chief, a "tutor," or regent, had to be appointed to direct the affairs of the clan. The choice was a most unhappy one, for it fell upon a thowless relative, who so discredited the trust reposed in him that he is known to tradition as "Iain Mishealbhach," or John, "the ill-fated." Under him the clan fell from the honourable place to which the late chief, William Cléireach, had raised it; and signs were not awanting of the baneful elements of disunion among the leading men of MacLeod. The "MacDonalds" were not slow to take advantage of this situation. They gathered a large army, with which they invaded Sleat, and took both Castle Camus and Dun Sgathaich by storm. Fired by these successes, they pushed northwards, according to the "MS. History of the MacLeods," to attack the Castle of Dunvegan, but, at Feorlig, they were met, and repelled, by a strong force of the MacLeods of Skye, and of Lewis, and led by the chief of the latter clan. That chief took young Iain of Dunvegan with him to Lewis, became his sponsor, and, before long, had him proclaimed chief of the MacLeods at Rodel in Harris.

Meanwhile the "MacDonalds" had other designs in hand, and Donald of the Isles, who had enormously aggrandised his position by his marriage with the daughter of the Earl of Ross, began to make overtures to the young chief of MacLeod, in order that he might win his allegiance. Now, since the MacLeods had hitherto held their lands as vassals of the Earl of Ross, and since Donald had then assumed that dignity, the MacLeods had no alternative but to comply with the wishes of their superior.

That John was a loyal subject of the Lord of the Isles is shown by the fact that, when the latter rose in rebellion against the government of Albany, he had no more eager supporter than the chief of the MacLeods. According to the Sleat sennachie, he was present at Harlaw in command of his own clan, and of the MacLeods of Lewis as well. He was placed in the centre of the Highland army, but, as it is stated in the " MS. History of the MacLeods," he resented the position accorded to him; and even refused to fight until he was given " the post of honour " on the right. The authors of " Clan Donald " aver that the name of the MacLeod chief of that day was " Norman," and that " he fell on Harlaw among the first"; but we read in the " MS. History of the MacLeods " that, in the course of the battle, the chief was wounded by an arrow in the forehead, and that, owing to the primitive surgical skill of his age, the wound had never healed, so that, when blood-pressure happened to be in any way increased, the scar opened, and he bled profusely.

This disablement would, indeed, seem to have been the cause of his death, which took place in 1442. According to the " MS. History of the MacLeods," whilst he was engaged in a friendly fencing bout with one of his men at his castle of Pabay, in Harris, he became so incensed at being bested that, flinging aside his sword, he grappled in wrestling with his opponent, and, owing to the strain of the contest, the scar burst open, and he bled to death.

His fiery temper had earned for him the nickname of " Borb," or " The Truculent "; but he had proved himself a good chief, and a warrior of renown. That the diginity of the clan did not decline under his regime, is shown by the fact that two of his daughters were married, one to the chief of Lewis, and another to MacLean of Duart; while his wife was a grand-daughter of the Earl of Douglas. His oldest son and heir was named William, and his second son, Norman, whom some held to have been the oldest, was killed in Lochaber in 1429, in that terrible defeat that James I., in person, inflicted on Alexander, son of Donald, Lord of the Isles. On hearing of her husband's death, MacLeod's wife gave birth to a son prematurely. The child lived; and in his youth he was placed under the protection of his uncle, MacLeod of Lewis, who conferred the district of Waternish on him. This man was the ancestor of the MacLeods of Meadle, Balmeanach, and Glendale, and the grandfather of John of Waternish, "Iain a' Chuil Bhàin," who, for five or six years, had given such able service in that unhappy time that overtook his clan during the early days of "The Heiress of the Isles."

In 1431 a new insurrection against the government broke out, headed by Donald Balloch, a cousin of the Earl of Ross. It was suppressed with relentless severity by the king, James I., whose troops overran Sleat, and took possession of its principal castle-forts, Camus, and Dun Sgathaich. The MacLeods had, of course, always asserted their claims over that portion of Skye, although they possessed no legal title to it. Indeed, the only part of their lands that they held by right of charter was, as we have already seen, the district of Glenelg, which had been granted to them in 1343.

William Dubh.

The sixth chief of the MacLeods "of Glenelg," as the clan was then styled, was named William Dubh, or the Black; and he assumed power about the year 1442. It is noteworthy that it was during his administration that the MacDonalds succeeded in obtaining in Skye a footing that they were never again to lose. Thus we find that John, Lord of the Isles, conferred a grant of 28 marklands of Sleat on his son, Celestine of Lochalsh, in 1469; and that the latter transferred this district, together with Uist and Benbecula, to his brother, Hugh, whose descendants have held these lands in unbroken succession down the ages. It is significant that the charter conveying these lands to Hugh of Sleat was confirmed by William, the chief of MacLeod, showing the amicable relations that then existed between these clans.

And further evidence of the friendly feelings that animated the clans at that time is afforded by their joint action in a raiding expedition into Orkney. According to the Sleat sennachie, and also to the Book of Clan Ranald, the Earl of Orkney had made certain disparaging insinuations about Hugh of Sleat, as the latter was on a visit in Edinburgh. On his return home, Hugh got together a large fleet, and, reinforced by the MacLeods, under their chief, he made for Orkney. There, as the Sleat sennachie has it, "having routed the enemy, Austin (Hugh) and his party began to ravage the country, that being the only reward they had for their pains and fatigue, with which, having loaded their galleys, they returned home." This was in 1460. In the year 1476 an event happened that was to have very far-reaching consequences, not only for the Western Isles, but also for Scotland as a whole. That was the surrender by John, Lord of the Isles, of all his lands to the king; so that, for all practical purposes, this important dynasty had henceforth ceased to trouble the peace of the nation. Many of his closest relatives were incensed at this act of submission on the part of their superior; but chiefly were they alienated from him by his action in conferring lands, somewhat lavishly, as they thought, on such of his vassals as the MacLeans, MacNeills, and the MacLeods. His most bitter accuser was his own son, Angus Og, a man blessed with great vigour of body and mind, but cursed with an all-consuming ambition. The disaffected chieftains hoped to find in the undutiful son a leader who would help them to redress their wrongs; and they hoped not in vain. Soon civil war was raging in the isles. The old lord was supported, among others, by the MacLeods; while another Skye chieftain, Donald Gallach, son of Hugh of Sleat, ranged himself and his clan on the side of Angus Og.

The associates of the opposing factions met in battle off the coast of Ardnamurchan, at a place called Bloody Bay. According to the sennachie of Sleat, Ronald Bain, son of the laird of Moidart, bore down upon MacLeod's galley, and, fixing to it his grappling irons, a stalwart Irishman " thrust the blade of an oar below the stern post of MacLeod's galley, between it and the rudder, which prevented the galley from being steered."

It would appear that the battle was waged with great ferocity and determination, and it is said that when the issue was going against them the MacLeods displayed the Fairy Flag; but the effect was unavailing.

One after another of the dozen guardians of the clan's palladium was struck down in the terrible carnage; and mention is made of one of these in particular. This was a certain Murchadh Breac, or " Murdo, the Pock-marked," who, pierced by a spear, collapsed on the deck, but the stout warrior unflinchingly held the flag aloft, sticking the pole in the gaping hole in his side until a comrade relieved him of his charge.

In " The MacLeods of Dunvegan," it is said that the chief was killed early in the fight, while the authors of Clan Donald state that he was wounded so severely that he died on his return to Dunvegan; but in the most reliable account we possess of that engagement, namely, "The MS. History of the MacDonalds," written about 1664 by Hugh MacDonald, the sennachie of Sleat, it is stated that "Angus Og and Allan, Laird of Moidart, attacked MacLeod, and took him prisoner."

However it happened, it seems that William did not long survive the affair of Bloody Bay. He was buried in Iona, the last of the MacLeod chiefs to be committed to the dust of that sacred isle.

Owing to the part the MacLeods had taken on the side of the Lord of the Isles, the MacDonalds sent an army to invade their territory in Skye. Having effected a landing at Aird Bay in Duirinish, they at once began their work of devastation. The chief of the MacLeods is said to have been from home, but the affairs of the clan did not suffer in the hands of his redoubtable son, Alexander, who acquitted himself with such bravery and skill that the invaders were routed. In the encounter, the young heir of MacLeod was severely wounded between the shoulders by the stroke of an opponent's axe. The severed tendons had never been brought to cohere again, so that he sustained a lasting deformity, and he is accordingly known to history and tradition as Alasdair Crotach, or the Hunchback.

Two years after the battle of Bloody Bay—*i.e.*, in 1482—it is recorded that Angus Og was styled Lord of Trotarnish, and in "The MacLeods of Dunvegan" mention is made of his invasion of that district, and his seizure of Duntulm Castle, then, but never again, the property of the MacLeods. On the death of Angus, in 1490, the peninsula of Trotarnish was claimed by his uncle, Hugh of Sleat; and for over two centuries that region was the cause of sore contention between the MacDonalds and the MacLeods.

Hitherto neither of these clans possessed any feudal title to the estates which they occupied in Skye, beyond the fact that their lands had been granted to them by an Earl of Ross, or a Lord of the Isles, each on his own authority. Thus, as we have already seen, the lands of Uist and of Sleat had been conferred by John, Lord of the Isles, on Celestine of Lochalsh, who, in 1469, conveyed them to his brother, Hugh of Sleat; and it is significant that this deed of gift was confirmed by King James IV. at Stirling in 1495. In the charter Hugh is referred to as "of Sleat" ("carissimo nostri fratri Hugoni Alexandri de Slete").

THE MACDONALDS.

Hugh, First Chief of Sleat.

Hugh, the first chief of the MacDonalds of Sleat, was the third son of Alexander, the third Lord of the Isles, and the second Earl of Ross, and it is from him that the MacDonalds of Skye derive their patronymic, "Clann Uisdein." We have already referred to the part which this warrior played in the invasion of Orkney in 1460, and to his inheriting of Uist and Sleat from his brother, Celestine of Lochalsh.

Like many another man of mark in his time, Hugh had a numerous family, legitimate and otherwise. Of these, the most noted were:—(1) John, his heir, whose mother was Finvola of Ardnamurchan; (2) Donald Gallach, the successor of John as chief, and the son of a daughter of the Crowner of Caithness, and whose association with Hugh is thus quaintly recorded by the Sennachie of Sleat: "On his return from the expedition to Orkney, Austin, having halted at Caithness, he got a son by the Crowner of Caithness' daughter of the name of Gun, which at that time was a very flourishing name there, descended from the Danes; (3) Donald Herrach, by a daughter of MacLeod; (4) Gillespic Dubh (black in person and in deed); and several others, all of whom are mentioned in the "Black Book of Clan Ranald." Hugh died in 1498 at a very advanced age, and he was buried in Sand in North Uist.

As this brings us to the end of a century, the social conditions prevailing at that time now fall to be dealt with.

CHAPTER IV.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS, 1263-1500.

THE CLAN SYSTEM.

AT the end of the fifteenth century a new era opened in the West Highlands of Scotland. On the extinction of the dignity of the Lordship of the Isles in 1493, the outlook of the chiefs underwent a material change. Hitherto they looked to the reguli, or the kinglets, of the Isles as their sole superiors, and to these they owed whatever titles they held for their possessions; but from now onwards a new principle is imposed upon them, whereby they are obliged to produce royal charters for any lands that they occupied.

The clan system, as we know it, had already come into existence about the middle of the thirteenth century; and during the intervening years had come to be firmly established as a social organism that was to play an important role in the history of the Highlands. Neither at this stage, nor afterwards, were the units of the clan all of the same name. Indeed, none who placed himself under a chief was excluded from patronage, provided he was prepared to conform to the regulations governing the particular clan in which he sought protection. Those who wished to place themselves under some powerful chief were obliged to observe an agreement called Bond of Manrent, and, for the privilege such a relationship entailed, they were bound to serve him "as their master, by land and sea." On the other hand, the superior was duty-bound to protect his protégé, and "maintain and defend him" as he would do in the case of any of his own kin.

A predominating feature in the government of the clan was the method that was followed in connection with the succession to the chiefship. The law of primogeniture had not made its appearance, nor yet for many years to come; and even the principle of hereditary succession was not observed with any rigidity. The individual raised to the dignity of chief owed his appointment to special qualities that commended themselves to the members of his clan; for it was not an uncommon occurrence to pass over the son of the last chief if unfit by age, or other constitutional disability, and to choose some individual, a brother perhaps, or even, as sometimes happened, a more remote relative, strict attention being paid to the essential that he belonged to the reigning line. The choice sometimes fell on illegitimates, as when Gillespic Dubh was chief of Clann Uisdean; but females were stringently excluded.

The clan was divided into two classes—Saoi and Daoi. The former were the warriors, whose duty it was to defend the tribe; and, being thus honoured, were absolved from all manner of manual toil. The latter comprised the despised weaklings, men who, unfitted physically or mentally for military service, were destined to pass their days in tending the flocks or in cultivating the soil.

Law and Order.

Although John Balliol had, in 1292, erected Skye into a sheriffdom, as part of a wide district comprising Wester Ross, Glenelg, the Small Isles, and the Long Island, the powers of judge were vested virtually in the chief. Certain perquisites were allowed him in virtue of his office, such as rebatement in dues and one-tenth of the fine imposed for convictions. There were then in Skye, as for many decades thereafter, people who were members of no particular clan; and, accordingly, were not readily amenable to the discipline that prevailed in the territory in which they sojourned. These men were included in the wide term, "broken men," and were a source of serious perplexity to established authority. It is said that they haunted the inlets and the straits of Raasay and Rona, and they were a constant menace to trade, especially to the fishing industry that was then beginning to attract the men of the east coast of Scotland, and even those of the Netherlands.

Trade and Industry.

Consequent on the far-seeing policy of James I., in endeavouring to foster national trade, the fishing industry of the Highlands began to experience a period of great prosperity during the fifteenth century. Large numbers of cattle were reared, but few were then exported; and for these, when bartering was not the practice, the prices were 2/- for a sheep, 13/4 for a cow, and 26/8 for a horse.

A Spaniard named Don Pedro de Ayala, who visited the court of James IV. in 1498, and had compiled a useful record of his impressions, speaks of numerous flocks of the Western Isles, and of the great quantity of barley that was raised there.

MANNER OF LIVING.

People in those days lived almost wholly on what they themselves could produce. Their wants were few, and they were satisfied with a diet consisting of barley in varied forms, together with flesh and fish, both of which were plentiful. They were very abstemious, and the vogue for foreign wines, which became so alarmingly prevalent in the succeeding century, had not then been introduced. The principal drink of the commonalty, and even of those in the higher rank of society, was a beverage called bland, produced from whisked whey, and preserved in cogs of wood for weeks, and even months, until it was strongly fermented. It was highly relished for its stimulating, salutary, and sustaining properties.

They were a hardy race, who, even on a little barley and cold water (fuarag eorna), and with the breacan (plaid) to cover them at night, could, in their rough campaignings, subsist for days without other form of food, and without seeking the shelter of a roof.

Despite the acts of lawlessness that at times disturbed the community, culture was not neglected among them. Indeed, it is questionable if Celtic art had ever touched the high place it then attained; and, although their religion was permeated by much superstition, and was corrupted by the worship of saints, it was a time of true devotion, and the influence of the Church was felt even by the most hardened warriors.

CHAPTER V.

FAMILY HISTORY, 1500-1600.

EVER since the early part of the reign of James I., the influence of the central authority was slowly but steadily penetrating the Highlands and Western Isles of Scotland, until, by the end of the fifteenth century, all the chiefs had been tamed into submission to the king. Driven to the conclusion, often by bitter experience, that insubordination to the national government would not redound to their interests, they seemed to tumble over one another in their eagerness to meet the wishes of their king; and a monarch then ruled who was strong enough, and was sufficiently discreet to direct the new attitude into a channel that might benefit the nation as a whole. The chiefs had, at length, been convinced that their only security for the lands they held lay in their possession of a royal charter; and James IV. saw to it that charters were not lavishly bestowed until he had assured himself of the loyalty of each grantee; and his beneficiaries were often reduced to a state of perplexing disquiet by his practice of conferring the same territory on different persons, even in the course of a single year.

But some of the chiefs, with whom he dealt in the Highlands, had displayed an astuteness under the circumstances that was truly marvellous, so that the cleverest artifices that the government of the day could bring to bear on the situation were often met by diplomatic strategy on the part of the chiefs that was every whit as nimble and as subtle as any that the central authority could devise. To the new conditions, few were able to adjust themselves so adroitly as the chief of the MacLeods of Skye, the celebrated Alasdair Crotach, whose prowess on the field of battle was equalled by his skill in the more difficult art of diplomacy.

THE MACLEODS.

ALASDAIR CROTACH, SEVENTH CHIEF.

In " The MacLeods of Dunvegan " there is mention of a battle which, if entitled to being accepted as authentic, must have happened early in the chiefship of Alasdair Crotach. According to that account, the MacDonalds, under their chief, Donald Gruamach, landed at Loch Eynort, and they made for Dunvegan, wasting Minginish, Bracadale, and most of Duirinish on the way.

The chief of the MacLeods was in Harris at the time, but he returned thence, and, with a band of his own men reinforced by a strong body of the MacLeods of Lewis, he landed at the head of Loch Pooltiel. He arrayed his force on the brow of a hill, with a river in front, and in this position he awaited the gathering of his own clan, which was being summoned to arms by Donald Mor of Meadle.

As soon as this cadet arrived with his contingent, the battle began, and for some time the MacDonalds were winning. Their success was, however, but shortlived, for Alasdair Crotach's mother, a MacLaine of Lochbuy, who is said to have repaired to the scene of combat with the Fairy Flag, had the wonder-working banner displayed, and immediately the tide of battle turned in favour of the MacLeods. Donald Gruamach was cut down by one of Alasdair Crotach's lieutenants, a Murdo MacAskill. This warrior raised the head of the slain chief on the point of his spear, and the pipers of MacLeod immediately struck up a lament. The MacDonalds understood the situation, and they fled from the field in confusion. In the pursuit, they were mercilessly cut down by the exultant MacLeods; and so terrible was the carnage, that the ravens of Creag an Fhitheich gorged themselves full for many a week. In the account that has been quoted, the battle is said to have been fought "about 1490." Now the chief of the MacDonalds of Sleat at that time, and for eight years thereafter, was Hugh, the first of his line, and not Donald Gruamach, who was the fifth chief in order of succession, and he lived until 1537.

On the forfeiture of the Lordship of the Isles, in 1493, the lands of Skye, as of the other islands comprising that dignity, came to be vested in the crown. Alasdair Crotach craved, and secured, royal charters for his possessions in Harris, and for Duirinish, Bracadale, Minginish, and Lyndale in Skye. The family already possessed a charter for Glenelg, since David II. conferred two-thirds of that district on Malcolm, the second chief, in 1343.

In addition to these territories, Alasdair Crotach now sought to obtain a claim over Sleat and Trotarnish—districts that were held by his family under the Earls of Ross; but he was successful only to the extent that he was recognised as holder of two unciates of Trotarnish, together with the bailiary, or stewardship, of the whole district. That concession was obtained in the month of June, 1498; and in October of the same year a grant was made by the king of the self-same region of Trotarnish, together with four marks of the tirunga of Duntulm, and four of Ardviceolain, to Torquil MacLeod of Lewis.

In return for these grants, the chief of Skye was enjoined to provide and maintain one galley of twenty-six oars, and two of sixteen oars, to be used in the service of the crown whenever desired, and the grantee was further obliged to preserve the nests of falcons on his domains for the king.

When the lands that had formerly pertained to the Lords of the Isles had been annexed to the crown, certain chiefs of the west became insubordinate, and were a source of much perplexity to the government of the day. The disaffection had become so acute that the king resolved to dispossess some of the more recalcitrant offenders, and substitute loyal subjects, or "true men." The effect of the royal resolution was to intensify the prevailing discontent; and at that time an event happened that was to precipitate matters for a general rising. Donald Dubh, whom all looked upon as the heir of the last Lord of the Isles, had escaped from prison, and the disaffected chiefs gathered around him in rebellion. This happened in 1502, and the insurrection had soon assumed such formidable proportions that the king in person had to go north with an army before the hostile alliance was finally disrupted in the year 1506.

All this time Alasdair Crotach had remained loyal to the king, and he was entrusted with the good government of the isles during those troublous years. His kinsman of Lewis was the last of the rebels to submit, and he was solemnly forfeited in Parliament. Thus it happened that Waternish in Skye, a district then belonging to the MacLeods of Lewis, was temporarily transferred to Alasdair Crotach. He was commissioned to let it to tenants, but his brief period of possession came to an end in 1511, when Waternish was once again restored to Siol Torcuil.

Once, however, the magnetic influence of James IV. was gone, the loyalty of Alasdair Crotach did not long remain true to the government. When the clans returned from the tragic field of Flodden, and a new insurrection was raised on behalf of the old House of the Isles, the chief of the MacLeods was one of the most active participants in the rebellion.

A meeting of the rebel chiefs was convened in Dun Akin, or Castle Moil, in Kyle, in 1513, and it was there resolved, with acclamation, to raise Sir Donald MacDonald of Lochalsh, who had been knighted by the late king on Flodden, to the dignity of Lord of the Isles. With this end in view, Alasdair Crotach stormed Dun-Sgàthaich; and, after effecting much damage, he captured that stronghold. It was probably in the same cause that he launched an assault against Castle Camus at Knock; but so obstinate was the defence opposed to him there, as it is averred by tradition, by a lady called " Mary of the Castle," that he was compelled to raise the siege, after a prolonged struggle.

But, like several others of his associates, Alasdair Crotach soon became dissatisfied with the conduct of Sir Donald MacDonald, and it appears the estrangement had become so acute that a conspiracy was on foot to seize the leader's person and to hand him over to the regent. He was, however, warned of the plot, and was able to make good his escape; but so great was the pressure exerted by Argyle, both by threats and by entreaty, that Alasdair Crotach and his accomplice, MacLean of Duart, apprehended two of Sir Donald's brothers, and offered them to the government in the hope of mitigating their own crimes. Remission was withheld for a considerable time; and when, at length, safe conduct had been granted him, Alasdair Crotach proceeded to Edinburgh, where he was pardoned. The record of the incident is as follows:— "In 1515 John, Duke of Albany, granted remission to Alasdair Crotach, his servants, landed men, gentlemen, and yeomen, for past crimes, especially for besieging and taking the Castle of Dunskaich; and holding it against the regent, and assisting Sir Donald of Lochalsh, and his accomplices."

The leniency accorded to him by the government emboldened him to plead for a grant of Trotarnish. In that, however, he was unsuccessful, although a promise had been made that he would not be disturbed in his occupancy of it for eleven years.

On this occasion, as on many another, his consummate skill as a diplomatist served him well; but he, like many another

Highland chief, was fortunate that the country was at the time distracted by the rivalries of men like Angus, Arran, and Albany—place-seekers who made the office of government a farce. It was thus to gain his allegiance that the Earl of Angus, during his brief period in power, conferred on Alasdair Crotach a charter for the lands of Sleat, and of North Uist, a grant that was fated to arouse the bitterest hostility between him and his able contemporary, Donald Gruamach, the young chief of Clann Uisdein. His relations from now onwards with that family entail a brief retrospect, in order to bring the history of the latter to date.

THE MACDONALDS.

As we have already seen, the first chief of the MacDonalds of Sleat, Hugh, son of Alexander, Earl of Ross, and Lord of the Isles, died in 1498. He left a large family of sons, whose rival claims were to bring much misery on the House of Sleat.

JOHN, SECOND CHIEF OF SLEAT.

John, the oldest son of Hugh, and of his first wife, Finvola of Ardnamurchan, succeeded his father in 1498.

On the final forfeiture of the Lordship of the Isles, in 1495, King James IV. went north, and he held his court in the Castle of Mingarry, whither many of the Highland chiefs repaired in order to tender their submission. As the Chief of Sleat was then very advanced in years, he sent his son, John, as his representative, to offer allegiance to the king.

There is little to record of this chief, but the sennachies always advert to his lack of patriotism, and his unnatural antipathy to his many half-brothers. As he had no children of his own, he tried to alienate the patrimony by resigning it to the king, who granted it, in the year 1505, to Ronald Alanson of Moidart. In the same year we find, in the "Register of Crown Rentals," that "the 80 merklands of Trouterness were let by the commissioners of the crown for three years to Ronald Bane Alanson of Moidart, the Earl of Huntly being surety for the payment of rent by the latter."

In that year also died the feckless chief of Sleat, mourned by few, and respected by none.

DONALD GALLACH, THIRD CHIEF.

In spite of all the machinations of the late chief, and even the granting of a charter to the Clan Ranald, the direct line was preserved in Sleat, in the person of Hugh's second son, Donald Gallach. His cognomen was derived, as we have already seen, from the fact that his mother was a daughter of the Gunns of Caithness. Donald had fought at Bloody Bay on the side of Angus Og, and he took a very active part in the insurrection of Donald Dubh in 1503.

According to the sennachie of Sleat, " he was a moderate man, inclined to peace, black-haired, and fair-skinned "; and he seems to have been of a different disposition from his older brother, for, according to the same authority, he granted lands to one of his half-brothers, to wit, Donald Herrach, " the upper davoch of Sleat, the davoch of Dunsgathaich, with four merklands in the west of Trotarnish." This transaction is, however, of doubtful authenticity.

However it was, it would appear that Donald Herrach, third son of Hugh, the first Chief of Sleat, and of a daughter of MacLeod of Dunvegan (then styled of Harris), was in possession of lands in Uist. Now there was another son of Hugh, by a daughter of Torquil MacLeod of Lewis, one of the name Gillespic Dubh, a man of outstanding ability, but of unrestrained ambition and fierce temper, and who resented the neglect shown to him in the allocation of the patrimonial estates. Egged on by another half-brother, Angus Collach, whose mother was a MacLean of Coll, and whose share of lands had also been stinted, Gillespic determined to acquire by force what had presumably been denied him because of his illegitimacy.

With that end in view, this dark schemer proceeded to Uist, where he paid an ostensibly friendly visit to his brother, Donald Herrach, who received him with great cordiality. Festivities over, the party repaired, according to the custom of the age, to indulge in feats of strength, and, as the weather was wet, the venue chosen for the games was a barn. This part of the entertainment was done at the instigation of the chief guest, and by suggesting it he was playing on the vanity of his unsuspecting brother, for Donald was known to be the most accomplished athlete in the whole island. "Aon bhuille na's leoir bho Dho'ull Hearach: cha robh feum riamh air a dhà" (One blow was enough from Donald Herrach: never was need of a second), the story-teller says of him.

After Donald had overcome all his opponents in wrestling, and beaten them in leaping, and in sword play, a novel competition was proposed, the aim in which was to touch with the chin, by taking a running leap, a noose that was projected over the top of a partition in the barn. This could easily be accomplished by Donald Herrach, but the crafty Gillespic had a man ensconced in the adjoining room holding an end of the rope, with the intention of pulling it tight when the victim's neck was in line with the loop. Pol na h-éile (Paul of the thong), as the hired assassin was called, succeeded only too well in carrying out his part in the dark deed; and as the athlete's body dangled from the rope, red-hot irons were thrust through the bowels, and the nefarious work was over.

Having removed this obstacle in the way of his advancement, Gillespic next hastened to Sleat, where he arrived before the news of the murder of his brother. At Dun Sgathaich, he was kindly received by the chief. The latter, at the time, had under construction a galley, of which he was very proud; and he led his brother to the shore to inspect it. After expressing his admiration of the craftsmanship of the builders, and feigning keen interest in every detail, Gillespic suddenly drew his brother's attention to an alleged defect in the ship's stern-post, low down at the keel. His surprised host stooped to examine the supposed flaw, and in that posture he was stabbed by his inhuman brother. The wound was not immediately fatal, and in a prayerful attitude the dying chief implored his murderer to spare his infant son.

Whether this blood-stained monster was at length stung with remorse for his deed of foul shame, cannot now be said, but it is stated that he took his nephew, together with the oldest son of the murdered Donald Herrach, under his protection, and that he treated them with fatherly care until they had attained to manhood.

Gillespic Dubh, Fourth Chief of Sleat.

This notorious fratricide succeeded in establishing himself in Sleat for a time; but his sway was short-lived. It would appear that his clansmen hounded him out of the district, and, escaping to Uist, he was expelled thence also by Ronald Alanson of

Moidart, whom John, the second chief of Sleat, had nominated as his heir.

Gillespic thereupon took to a life of piracy, and for three years he carried on his work of rapine, and evaded capture. At length the government's net was circling so closely around him that he saw the only way to purchase his own safety lay in betraying his associates; and, like the unscrupulous man he was, he carried out his resolve, and obtained the king's pardon. This was in 1509; and in the following year we find that he was granted the bailiary of Trotarnish, hitherto held by Alasdair Crotach, and a royal letter of protection was given to him, "enjoining the lieges, especially the tenants of Troutarness, that they should not disturb him, his factors, or servants, in their persons, or their goods, in the peaceable possession of their leases, which Gillespic had of the king in Troutarness, especially in the execution of his office of bailie."

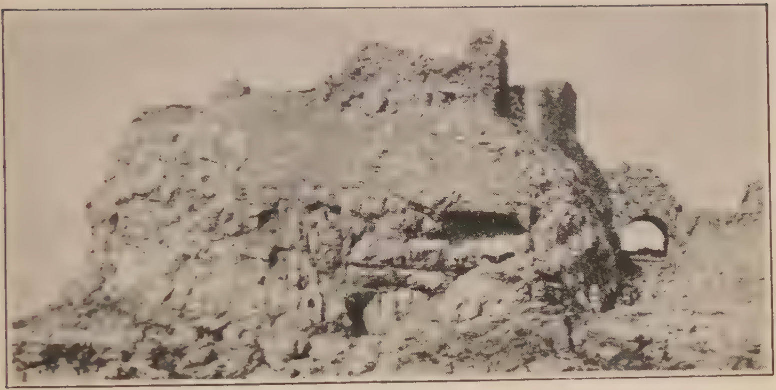
This appears to have been his reward for delivering his fellow-pirates to justice; and in the decree granting him remission for his crimes, one is astonished to find no mention made of the murders of his brothers.

It seems that he was the tutor or leader of his clan, if not even its chief, for about eight years; and the siege and capture of Dun-Sgathaich by Alasdair Crotach, in the insurrection in favour of Sir Donald of Lochalsh, would therefore have happened during his regime.

According to Hugh MacDonald, the sennachie of Sleat, he was killed by his nephews whilst hunting on Ben Lee, in Uist, in the year 1518. The traditional account is that these young men, who were still his protégés, determined to despatch their guardian, and their fathers' murderer.

In consonance with the preconceived arrangement to pick a quarrel with him, one of the youths, who was afterwards the famous warrior and diplomat, Do'ull Gruamach (Donald the Surly), let slip his own hound on the first view of the deer, and, being severely rebuked by the enraged chief for his act of presumption, the impetuous youth dealt his uncle such a blow as stretched him low on the heather.

Having recovered, the discomfited chief requested his other nephew, Ronald Herrach, to lend him a sword he carried; where-



DUN SGATHAICH.

CASTLE CAMUS.

upon Donald said: "Give it to him, and let him who murdered your father, and mine, try to kill me also." Galled by the recollection, Ronald made a savage thrust, and he drove the weapon right through the body of the chief.

The young men then returned to the house of their slain uncle, and entering, with seeming unconcern, were asked by the widowed lady if they had enjoyed much sport that day. The elder answered that they had grassed the rarest stag that had ever fallen to huntsman in a forest; and, interpreting the phrase of dark import aright, she wailed:

> " 'S truagh nach mise bha 'sa ghleann,
> Far 'n d'rinneadh feòil 's na dhòirteadh fuil;
> Far 'n leagadh an damh dualach, donn,
> Mo chreach leam nach robh mi muigh."

Do'ull Grumach (Donald the Surly), Fifth Chief of Sleat.

Donald Grumach, son of Donald Gallach, and of Agnes, widow of Torquil MacLeod of Lewis, succeeded to the chiefship of the MacDonalds of Sleat about 1518. For twenty long years the fortunes of his clan had been at a very low ebb; and it was a lucky stroke of fate that had raised a man of such ability, resource, and determination as Donald Gruamach to the headship of the clan. In order to strengthen his position, he entered into a bond of manrent with Campbell of Cawdor, brother of the Earl of Argyle; and this alliance obliged him to accompany the vacillating Scottish lords in their abortive incursion into England in 1523.

It was shortly before that time that a transaction was effected which was to invoke the bitterest animosity between the MacDonalds and the MacLeods; and to involve these rival clans in internecine strife for many a year. This was all caused by a grant made during the regency of the Earl of Angus, who had married the queen-mother, to Alexander of Dunvegan, of the lands of North Uist, and of Sleat—possessions which the MacDonalds considered as essentially their own; and the young chief of Clann Uisdean was not the man to allow such an action to go unchallenged.

He accordingly mobilised a vast army in Skye, and in Uist, and, aided by a considerable force of the MacLeods of Lewis, under John MacLeod, whom he afterwards helped to become chief of Siol Torquil, a descent was made on MacLeod's lands, the first objective being the expulsion of that clan, and all their kin, from the district of Trotarnish. The allies landed on the northern shores of the peninsula; and they proceeded systematically to drive the MacLeods out of the whole region. Terrible atrocities were committed. No quarter was given; and the panic-stricken inhabitants, leaving all their effects behind them, were in headlong flight. After having undergone intense suffering, the main body of the fugitives at length arrived at Skaebost. There they sent forward the survivors of their women and children, closed their ranks, and determined to arrest the pursuit at the ford of the river. Maddened by the cruelties they had endured, they swore an oath that each would exact the uttermost vengeance on the MacDonalds; and, having chosen the most favourable position, they wrought terrible execution on their foes as the latter were endeavouring to cross the flooded river. But by sheer pressure of numbers, the stubborn gallantry of the MacLeods was ultimately overcome, and the much-reduced band was once more in full flight for the west. So great was the carnage that it is said the scene of the fight was in consequence called "Achadh na fala," or the "Field of Blood"; and, as the heads of the slain combatants were carried down the river, they accumulated in a deep pool near the estuary, since known as "Coire nan Ceann," or the "Cauldron of Heads."

The MacDonalds then decided to discontinue the pursuit; and they proceeded to plunder the lands of the MacLeods. This was carried out on a vast scale, and, after several days of foraging, an enormous booty came into their possession. On the way home the lonely echoes of the Coolins were stirred into unwonted activity by the lowing of herds and the lusty shouts of exultant warriors making for Dun-Sgathaich.

All this happened in the year 1528, and it would appear that Alasdair Crotach had apprised the government of the devastation that was wrought by the MacDonalds, for we find that the Lords of Council had decreed that year that "Donald Gruamach and John MacTorquil MacLeod pay the said MacLeods for the spulzie—To MacLeod, four score marks, as compensation for 100 cows; to Talisker, compensation for 300 cows, 100 horses, 2000 sheep, and an equal number of goats; to Donald Roy, for the share of his loss in Carbost, 200 cows, 80 horses, 500 sheep, and an equal number of goats; to Ferchar Liath, 100 cows, 60 horses, 200 sheep, and 400 goats; to John MacAngus of Borroraig, 120 cows, 100 sheep, and the same number of goats; to Donald Glas, 80 cows, 100 sheep, 100 goats, and 100 horses."

No record has hitherto been found to show that the MacLeods had been compensated for the plunder; and it is almost safe to conclude, in view of subsequent events, that the injunction of the Council had not been obeyed.

In order to answer for his inruption into the district of Trotarnish, and perhaps also in view of the rebellious attitude of the island chiefs, when an effort was made by the young king to annul all grants of crown lands made during his nonage, Donald Gruamach was cited to appear before the Privy Council in 1530; but he refused to comply. In the following year, when a new summons was served on him, and on his neighbour, Ewen MacKinnon of Strath, he again flouted the royal command, and no measures were taken to compel him to obey it.

Henceforth, for all we know, the remainder of his short life was uneventful; but one incident falls to be recorded here. On one occasion a visit was paid to Dunsgathaich by the chief's favourite cousin, Ronald Herrach, who, as we have seen, was his coadjutor in the murder of Gillespic Dubh. There was a large company at the castle, among whom the relatives of the chief's wife, Catherine of Clan Ranald, were accorded a high place at table. Their haughty bearing, the deference shown to them, and especially the liberties which they took in the halls of his fathers, so roused Ronald's resentment, that he resolved to despatch them *en bloc*. His opportunity came at night, when he massacred twelve of them; and it is said he slung their bodies to the outside of the castle wall in full view of the bedroom of their patroness.

Early next morning he intimated his intention of leaving Dunsgathaich forthwith, and his astonished kinsmen pled with him to prolong his stay. Finding that all entreaties were futile, the chief finally begged him, at least, to delay his departure until the lady of the castle should be ready to bid him farewell. "No," answered Ronald, "I must leave instantly, for she will not bless me when she looks out of her window and views my morning's work"; and he judged her aright, for this daughter of the Clan

Ranalds had her revenge shortly afterwards, when Ronald was murdered in Griminish, in North Uist, by an assassin of the name of Mackinnon, whom she had hired for the purpose.

Ronald had spent the early part of his life in Ireland, where he greatly distinguished himself in the wars of that country. He afterwards returned, wounded, to Skye, whither he was accompanied by a faithful physician of the name of MacLean, on whom lands were conferred at Cuidreach. From this notable man was descended a succession of doctors, famous for their knowledge of botany, and of the medicinal virtues of herbs. The best known of them was the learned Dr. John MacLean, who occupied Shulista, and acted in the dual capacity of physician and factor both to Sir Alexander and to Sir James MacDonald of Sleat. He died about 1780.

Ronald Herrach passed the latter part of his life in North Uist, and he is the progenitor of the MacDonalds of Balranald.

Although he had never succeeded in securing royal charters for his lands, Donald Gruamach raised the prestige of his clan to a position of high eminence. According to the account already quoted from "The MacLeods of Dunvegan," he was killed at the "Battle of Glendale"; but this is probably apochryphal. The persistent tradition in Sleat, and in Strath, is that he was found dead on Druim nan Cleoc at the spring, since called "Tobar Dho'uill Ghruamaich." He died in 1537.

He was twice married, first to Catherine, the daughter of Alexander MacDonald of Clan Ranald, and, secondly, to Margaret, daughter of MacLeod of Lewis. By the latter he had three sons, John Og, who married a daughter of Alasdair Crotach; Archibald "the Clerk," the father of the infamous Hugh ("Uisdean MacGhillespic Chleirich"); and James Gruamach of Castle Camus, who also was married to a daughter of Alasdair Crotach, and was captain of the clan during the minority of Donald Gormson. By his first wife Donald Gruamach had one son, his successor, Donald, who is distinguished by the agnomen, "Gorm," probably from a birthmark.

It is interesting to note that Donald Gruamach was the first of a succession of five chiefs, all of whom were called Donald. They were Donald Gruamach, Donald Gorm, Donald Gormson (Sasunnach), Donald Gorm Mor, and Donald Gorm Og (Mac Ghillespic Chléirich).

DONALD GORM.

Donald Gorm, the young chief of Sleat, was a man of great promise, and one of the most able and ambitious of his line. He early aspired to the Lordship of the Isles, for he was the direct heir to the dignity, as is shown by the fact that he received the support of all the branches of Clan Donald. But two important Highland chiefs opposed his pretensions, namely, MacKenzie of Kintail and Alexander MacLeod "of Dunvegan."

Despite the severity with which the latter's clan had been expelled from Trotarnish in 1528, it seems that they had returned to the district some time during the intervening years. Soon, however, it was permanently to be wrenched from them by the MacDonalds. The young chief of that clan had greatly strengthened his position by his marriage with his cousin, the heiress of Lewis; and, in May, 1539, he invaded Trotarnish, aided, as was his father eleven years previously, by a formidable force of Siol Torquil. On this, the final expulsion of the MacLeods from Trotarnish, the family seat of the MacDonalds was changed to Duntulm, which was to remain their principal residence until a few years after the Rebellion of 1715.

DUNTULM CASTLE.

The date 1539, which is given as the year the MacDonalds left Dunsgathaich and removed to Duntulm, is tentative, but in the light of all the available evidence it seems to be approximately correct. We know that this was their principal seat when James V. paid his memorable visit to the Isles in 1540; and it is said that the king was impressed by its commodiousness and its strength; and well he might.

The castle of Duntulm occupies a formidable position on an imposing promontory to the north of Score Bay in Kilmuir. It is inaccessible from the sea that surrounds its iron rocks on all sides, except at a narrow isthmus that joins its site to the mainland. There are even still so many traces of outworks here, of walls, of trenches, and, perhaps, a moat, that this stronghold was well nigh impregnable in its day.

Local tradition declares that a fort occupied this site from very early times, and that it was demolished to provide material for the erection of the castle. After the Norse sway had come to an end in 1263, the castle of Duntulm frequently changed hands—now in the possession of the vassals of the Earls of Ross, then of those of the Lords of the Isles; but, for the most part, it was held by the MacLeods "of Dunvegan." It is said that nothing was spared to make it a residence worthy of a great chief, and in order to ensure fertility the soil of seven kingdoms was brought to its policies.

When Iain Lom, the bard, visited Duntulm in 1663, in order to exhort Sir James MacDonald to avenge the murder of the "Children of Keppoch," he thus alludes to the castle:

"Gu Dunthuilm nam fear fallain,
Far 'n greadhnach luchd eallaidh,
Gabhail fàilte le caithream,
As na clàrsaichean glana,
Do mhnaoi òig nan teud banala binn."

But little now remains to attest the pristine glory of "Dun Thuilm nam baideal àrda." Two lofty, but ruinous, pieces of masonry represent all that is left of the keep; and a dark vault or two may still be seen. The wall facing the Minch is well preserved, and as one looks from its giddy height one is reminded of the tragedy alleged by tradition to have befallen the family of Donald Gorm, when a child, taking a sudden jerk in the arms of its nurse, fell from the awesome heights of the battlements, to be dashed to death upon the cruel rocks below. Indeed, some writers aver that this was the reason why the MacDonalds left Duntulm altogether; while the credulous nurse another tradition, characteristically embellished, that what induced their removal was the disturbing frequency with which the ghost of Donald Gorm Mor sought to revisit his earthly mansion!

He often returned with two companions from the other world, for it would appear that they scorned the ambrosial liquour of the gods. They clearly preferred the native bree, on which he and his consorting shades oftentimes became hilariously rude, much to the annoyance, and the awe, of the mortal occupants of the castle. They could be seen, and heard, but would not speak to any one; and lockfast doors offered them no resistance.

The bacchanalian visitations of the ghosts were becoming so alarming and frequent, that the tenants of Duntulm sought the advice of a saintly man, who advised them to supply each of seven stalwart fellows with a spill of burning bog-pine, and, equipped with these as torches, and as charms, they were to enter the chamber of the supernatural roysterers and try to drive them out.

This was done; and the ghosts were so influenced by the sacred lights that they were no longer formidable. Donald Gorm Mor addressed the human intruders; and, bewailing his sudden transformation, said:

> "If it were not for thy slender lance of fire,
> This would have been to thy hurt, young Donald Gorm."

He then went on to tell his nephew and heir the location of important documents relative to his estates; for he felt he must conciliate mortals in order to be released from the spell which now so strongly bound him:

> "I was in Edinburgh last night;
> I am in my own mansion this night;
> And worth of mote in the sunbeam,
> I have not in me of might."

We are as ignorant of the exact date the MacDonalds left Duntulm as we are of the time they entered it. It is traditionally said that the last festivity that took place there was held just before the MacDonalds set out in the Rebellion of 1715; but, according to the evidence of the Commissioners of Forfeited Estates, Sir Donald MacDonald was living there in 1716; and, in an account of the Highland clans, written in the year 1725, the MacDonalds had not even then evacuated this stronghold; for there it is said: "The principal residence of the MacDonalds is Duntulm."

But to return. "Some days subsequent to the invasion of Trotarnish in 1539," according to the Rev. Alexander MacGregor, the scholarly minister of Kilmuir, "Donald Gorm passed over from Trotarnish to Kintail, to be avenged of the MacKenzies, owing to their hostility to his pretensions." The MacLeods of Lewis did not follow him then, but in their place he had the assistance of a goodly band of the MacKinnons of Strath; and it is said that a fleet of fifty galleys bore the allies over to Applecross. After ravaging Torridon and Kinlochewe, Donald proceeded to take MacKenzie's stronghold, the castle of Eilean Donain; and he concluded this would be an easy matter, as the garrison that defended it consisted of only three men. He surrounded the castle; but the brave triumviri put up a stout resistance for an hour or so, and then their arrows came less frequently. Concluding that their ammunition was at the point of exhaustion, Donald Gorm unwittingly exposed himself in his endeavours to find a place that might prove the best approach to the castle. Immediately an arrow whizzed through the air, the last, it is said, in the fort, and buried its barb deep in the thigh of the chief of Clan Donald. More annoyed than hurt by this mischance, he seized the galling shaft, and, wrenching it recklessly out of his flesh, he severed an artery, so that, in spite of all his men could do, he bled to death. He was carried to an islet near by, and the site of the rude hut in which the brave Donald Gorm died is still pointed out, according to Gregory, as "Làrach Tigh Mhic Dho'uill." His enraged followers took a terrible revenge before they returned home, and it is said that they burned every house and boat in the district.

Thus ended an insurrection that might have had grave consequences, but for the untimely death of an able and aspiring leader.

Meanwhile the king had fully gauged the seriousness of the disaffection that had shown itself in the West Highlands; and he resolved to take effective measures to stamp it out. Great preparations were made, and, by the end of May, 1540, a large fleet, well-equipped with men and munitions, set sail from the Firth of Forth. On board were such notable men as Cardinal Beaton and the Earls of Arran and Huntly.

After it had called at several places on the way, the fleet sailed from Lewis to Harris. Thence it made for Skye; and although some authorities, among whom are the authors of Clan Donald, aver that Alasdair Crotach was arrested here and made a prisoner, one is strongly tempted to doubt this. Lesley, Bishop of Ross, who wrote of a period of Scottish history in 1578, does not say that he was imprisoned: he states, merely, that the king sent "ane cumpanye to Mc Clewde Hariche, quha come furth of his Ile to the king's presens alsua." Indeed, the chief of MacLeod had very strong reasons for dissociating himself with the cause of Donald Gorm, in view of the raid made by the latter on his lands in the previous year. Besides, it would appear that

Alasdair Crotach was a royal favourite, for in 1539 his charter for Glenelg was confirmed; and, in 1542, he actually received a charter for the districts of Uist and of Sleat, while in the following year Trotarnish was conferred on him in life-rent to the extent of 80 merklands. It is therefore highly improbable that, if he had been a prisoner in 1540, he should have been so generously dealt with in 1542. It is a fact, however, that he was obliged to give hostages as a guarantee of his allegiance in future; and to that end his third son, Norman, accompanied the king's entourage on its way to the south.

Resuming its voyage, the royal convoy made for Duntulm; and the king was greatly impressed by the natural strength of that imposing castle-fort. Thence rounding Rudha Hunish, the fleet proceeded by the east coast of Skye; and it entered Loch Chalum Chille, the name, until then, of the Bay of Portree. Here a stay was made of several days' duration; and so impressive was the spectacle that the name of the district came to be changed from Kiltaraglen, the chapel of Talorgan (the Culdee who had a cell at Beil), to Port an Rìgh, or the King's Harbour.

Thither went many of the mainland lairds, ostensibly to do obeisance to their king, but virtually to crave the royal favour, now that they were made aware of the measures he was taking against their brother chiefs. Bishop Lesley mentions "the laird of Clan Ranald and John Moydert," the captain of Clan Ranald, whose haughty bearing so offended his sovereign that an order was given for his immediate arrest.

In view of the part the MacDonalds of Skye had played in the late uprising, one is inclined to conclude that the captain of Clann Uisdean, Archibald the Clerk, was among the prisoners; but of this there is no evidence, and the authors of Clan Donald declare that he was free. The period of his detention could not, in any case, have been of long duration, for it is on record that "Archibald Ilis, alias Archibald the Clerk, and Alexander MacConnell Gallich, had been granted remission on 22nd March, 1541, for their treasonable fire raising and burning of boats at Ellandonan, and for the heirchip (plundering) of Kinlochewe and Trouterness."

The fleet once more set sail, this time to loyal Kintail, whence, passing through the Sound of Sleat, it steered south as far as

Kintyre. There it was commanded to retrace its course, and to take the captive chiefs and the hostages by the north of Scotland to the port of Leith. Lindsay of Pittescottie thus comments on the expedition to the Isles: "The king passed through the isles, and there held justice-courts, and punished both chiefs and traitors according to their deserts; syne brought many of the great men of the isles captive with him, such as the MacDonalds and the MacLeods of Lewis, etc. Some he put in ward, and some he had in courts, and some he put in pledges for true faith in time coming. So he brought the isles in good rule, and peace, whereby he had great profitable service and obedience of people a long time thereafter."

But peace was not permitted long to reign undisturbed in the Isles, for the untimely death of the king in 1542, and especially the dominant position of England, encouraged the chiefs of the West Highlands to raise a new rebellion. The direct heir of the Lord of the Isles had at that time been granted his freedom. This was Donald Dubh, the son of the undutiful Angus Og; and he was enthusiastically supported by most of the Highland chiefs, despite their pledges of loyalty of the previous year. Alasdair Crotach, Ewen MacKinnon of Strath, and Gillespic Cleireach, the captain of the MacDonalds, joined the rebel Donald will all their men; and a formidable array was soon in the field. Cognisant of the weakness of the rule of Albany, and confident in their own powers, they bade defiance to the government, and entered into overt alliance with England. The name of Gillespic Cleireach is found about this time as signatory to a commission sent to Henry VIII. In 1545 an army, about 4000 strong, went to Ireland—men of splendid physique they were, by all accounts—and they took the oath of allegiance to the king of England, turning traitors, it must be confessed, for the sake of that country's gold. But Donald Dubh died shortly after this, and, as the next heir to the dignity of Lord of the Isles was MacDonald of Sleat, the position of the representative of that house as a minor, and the loss of prestige under which his clan seems to have been suffering at the time, left him out of account. Besides, the MacDonalds were far from easy, owing to the machinations of Alasdair Crotach; and they had real cause for perturbation, as he was then in actual possession of a charter for the lands which they occupied.

ALASDAIR CROTACH *(continued)*.

Alasdair Crotach was one of the ablest chiefs of his age. He combined in himself the powers of the warrior with the talents of the diplomat in a remarkable manner, and he must also have been endowed with a culture of high degree. He encouraged the bards by conferring lands on them free of all ordinary burdens, and the earliest of the MacCrimmons found in him a most helpful patron. In order to endow their college, he allocated to them the districts of Borreraig, and of Galtrigil; and these lands remained in the possession of the family of the MacCrimmons until the year 1770.

He built one of the towers of his castle at Dunvegan, where he lived magnificently. A story is told of him when once in Edinburgh at the King's palace. Certain lowland nobles who were present were somewhat piqued at the graceful ease with which this "uncultivated" Highlander conducted himself at the royal table. Sly comments were made on the munificence of the entertainment in order to induce him to evince surprise, but he remained imperturbable. Finally, one nobleman, more insistent than the rest, pointedly remarked: "Now MacLeod, I wonder if you have ever seen in Skye, halls so spacious as these, a roof so lofty, a table so ample and so richly laden, and candelabra so ornate, as those around us here to-night."

"These halls are certainly grand, and the plenishing is truly magnificent," returned the Highland chief, "but in our country we could show you a roof that is even more impressive, a table greater and grander than this by far, and candelabra that are more wonderful than those gorgeous ones that support the lights of our chamber to-night."

"I shall go all the way to Skye to prove that you are both vainglorious and false," returned the Lowlander, with venom in his voice.

"No one ever, with impunity, dared to ascribe such opprobrious terms to me," replied Alexander, with unruffled dignity, "and it would have gone hard with you but for the deference that is your due as my prospective guest; but, after you have partaken of the hospitality I can provide, I hope you are man enough to give a true report, to this august company, of all you have seen and enjoyed."

The Highland chief returned home, and notice soon arrived of the approach of the Lowland earl, and preparations, on a grand scale, were made for his reception.

He happened to arrive at Dunvegan in the late afternoon, but instead of being conducted with his retinue to the castle, they were led to the hills in the direction of Heleval Mòr ("MacLeod's Table"). The sun had already sunk in the west when they gained the summit of that noble hill, around which stalwart clansmen stood, bearing flambeaus aloft to light the scene. The mountain's flat top was covered over its whole extent with viands of all kinds, and a copious supply of wine.

Turning to his guests, the chief ceremoniously invited them to sit down and partake of his cheer. After all had enjoyed the al fresco banquet, he turned to his detractor, and, pointing to the star-spangled skies, he quietly remarked: "Truly, sir, this is a roof grander than was ever made by human hands; this table, you must confess, is more commodious than any that can be shown even in the royal court; while those faithful vassals of mine are more precious by far than any metallic contrivances, however costly and ornate the latter may be."

The Lowland earl humbly begged for mercy for his having been so rash, and so unjust; and his apology was accepted by the Highlander with his customary graciousness of demeanour. Thereafter the party proceeded to the castle, where they were entertained for several days with the greatest cordiality; and when they departed, there was no disposition amongst them to jeer at the Highland chief or at his manner of living.

Alasdair Crotach, the chief of Dunvegan, was now advanced in years, and it appears he abdicated the chiefship some time before his death in favour of his son, William. In 1541 he had already resigned to the latter certain lands in Easter and Wester Lyndale, and in Bracadale, of which the following are specially mentioned: "Vngcladdach, Vngroak, Sagerry, Voagyne, Penyzegeyn, Stapok, Grobane, Layglane, and Oysestill in Braikodell." He went to live at the monastery of St. Clements in Rodel of Harris, a church which he himself had generously endowed with lands. He rebuilt the church, and in it he prepared for himself, nineteen years before his death, a tomb that is perhaps the most beautiful work of sculpture in the Western Isles. There he was buried in 1547, the first of the chiefs of MacLeod to be laid in Rodel, all his predecessors, from Leot down, having found a last resting-place in the Island of Iona.

He was married to a daughter of Allan XII. of Lochiel, and he had a family of three sons and ten daughters. Of the latter, one was married to a half-brother of Donald Gorm of Sleat, namely, James Gruamach of Castle Camus, a man who was the captain of Clan Uisdean during the minority of Do'ull Gorm Mor.

WILLIAM, THE EIGHTH CHIEF OF MACLEOD.

Alasdair Crotach was succeeded, in 1547, by his oldest son, William, who, as we have already seen, had acted as regent during the latter years of his father's life. This chief is sometimes called "Uileam na h-uamha," or "William of the Cave," and many take it for granted that he owes the latter designation to his being the perpetrator of the Massacre of Eigg; but as the date now given to that event, following the authority of Skene, is 1577, the guilt cannot be laid to the account of this chief, who was dead in 1551.

He married Agnes Fraser, daughter of the fourth Lord Lovat, a union entered upon as part of the agreement that terminated the long-continued dispute between the MacLeods and Frasers over the possession of Glenelg. There was but one child of this marriage, a daughter, and as William was old before he assumed the chiefship, he was naturally uneasy about the succession.

At his father's funeral in Rodel, he endeavoured to sense the feelings of the principal men of his clan; and his worst fears were realised when most of them declared their aversion to the principle of female succession. He allowed this discovery to affect his whole attitude towards the cadets of the clan, with the result that he alienated their goodwill, so that few were disposed to support his daughter, Mary, at his death in 1551.

"THE HEIRESS OF THE ISLES."

The heiress was then only nine years of age; but for many years she was to remain a personage of note in the politics of Scotland. Her great wealth attracted the attention alike of chiefs and nobles, who contended and intrigued for the rights of her wardship.

The first person to secure the coveted honour was the Chancellor of the realm, the Earl of Huntly; and, in order to understand the significance of the transaction, it may be appropriate to give the gist of this deed of gift. It comprised control of "all the dewties, males, ferms, of all the lands underwritten—Areth (Harris), Dunnevagane, Trouterness, Slaitt, North Oist, Duryness, Brakadell, Megynes (Minginish), and Glenelg, and all other lands and annual rents which perteined to the umquhile William Mac Cleoid, with the castles, towers, fortalices, mylnis, multures, woods, fishings," etc., all of which were conferred on Huntly in 1552.

Three years later we find that Huntly transferred the rights of worship to the Earl of Argyle for the sum of 1200 marks; but this transaction was soon to be declared null and void.

At this time disturbances had arisen in the Isles and the Western Highlands, and the chiefs who were responsible for the feuds were said to have been Donald Gormson of Sleat, MacLeod of Lewis, and MacKenzie of Kintail. The Queen Regent, Mary of Guise, issued a commission to Huntly, and to Argyle, to proceed against these unruly vassals, and compel them to tender hostages as a guarantee of their good behaviour in future.

Huntly failed utterly to carry out his obligations, alleging general insubordination among his troops, and incompatibility of action between the Highland and the Lowland sections of his army. His pretexts did not, however, commend him to the Queen Regent. She deprived him of all his honours, annulling, at the same time, his contract with Argyle in connection with the wardship of Mary MacLeod, which she reserved to herself.

The new faith was then making rapid headway in Scotland, and, in order to stem its advance into the Highlands, the regent was eager to win to her side those who might support her against the bold activities of the new Protestant noble, the fifth Earl of Argyle. Accordingly, in the year 1559, she conferred the wardship of the young heiress of MacLeod on James MacDonald of Dunneyveg, in Islay; but she soon had cause to regret her choice, for the ingrate MacDonald doubly disappointed her by turning Protestant and marrying the sister of Argyle.

Meanwhile, by some stratagem that has never been explained, the heiress came into the custody of MacKenzie of Kintail; and he refused to deliver her up when enjoined to do so. In 1562, however, he was compelled, by an act of the Privy Council, to surrender her to the young queen, who had lately returned from France. She seems to have been engaged as a maid of honour at the royal court from that time until about 1565, for, in notices from the accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland, there are such items as the following:—"XXIII. day of Decr., be the Quenis' grace, Precept to Marie MacCloid—Ane ell, 1 quarter, of black welvot to be hude, mufell, and turet, the elne, XV lib."

Also, on "Vj day of Marche, 1565," there appears another item of expenditure on behalf of "Marie MacCloid, in her Grace's chamber," where we shall leave her meantime, and survey affairs at home.

We have already seen that the late chief had dealt harshly with the principal men of his clan for their refusal to support the claims of his daughter to the headship of the clan; and, in his exasperation, he also turned against his brothers, Donald and Norman, whom he drove out of Skye. It is said that the former betook himself to England, where he remained until five or six years after the death of the chief.

IAIN A' CHUIL BHAIN, NINTH CHIEF OF MACLEOD.

As this Donald and his brother were abroad at the time of William's death, the clan hailed as their chief the head of the family called "Sliochd Mhic Iain 'ic Leòid," a man named "Iain a' Chuil Bhàin," who was a great-grandson of Norman, twin-brother of William Dubh, the sixth chief, who fought at the battle of Bloody Bay in 1480. Indeed, this family had all along contended that their ancestor, Norman (who, as we have seen, was killed in Lochaber in 1429 while fighting with Alexander, son of Donald, Lord of the Isles, against King James I.), was the older of the two sons of Iáin Borb. This branch now came into its own; and their representative, John, "The Fair Haired," proved himself to be an efficient chief, who guided the affairs of his clan to the entire satisfaction of all.

His popularity and worth were shown in a significant way when, towards the end of his reign, Donald, the exiled brother of the late chief, returned to Dunvegan apparently to press his claims to the chiefship. A meeting of the clan was held at Lyndale in the month of March 1557, in order to consider the situation, and, after a lengthy discussion, it was there decided to leave Iain a' Chiul Bhàin in undisturbed possession, but that, on his death, the estates were to revert to the original line, in the person of Donald MacLeod, or of his heir.

The latter part of the contract roused to action the second son of Iain a' Chuil Bhàin, one variously called Iain Og and Iain Dubh; and the latter epithet is justly attributed to this man of "dark" deeds. That very night, while the company was still at Lyndale, he conspired to remove that relative who stood between him and his ambition; and, when all had retired to rest, he burst into Donald's tent and murdered him in his sleep. For this outrage he was expelled by the clan; but he sought the protection of the notorious pirate, Uisdean MacGhillespic Chléirich, who befriended him for a time.

A few months after this incident the chief, Iain a' Chuil Bhàin, died, and he was buried in Rodel. After the ceremony of interment was over, it was resolved by the leading men of the clan to raise to the chiefship the grandson of Iain a' Chuil Bhàin, who was a minor, and to confer the dignity of tutor on a younger brother of Iain Dubh, a man called Donald Breac.

IAIN DUBH OR IAIN OG, TENTH CHIEF OF MACLEOD.

When the cadets of his clan were in Harris, Iain Dubh, by a *coup de main*, succeeded in taking Dunvegan Castle, and in establishing himself there. On the return of his clansmen from his father's funeral, he laid a trap for his own brother, Donald, who had been appointed regent, and for his two nephews, Norman and Donald, the older of whom was now the chief. As soon as these men had passed through the "sea-gate," they were set upon, and foully murdered, by Iain Dubh and his associates. By maintaining a powerful garrison in the castle, and holding as hostages the sons or daughters of the chief men of the clan, he was able to enforce obedience to his will, and to secure his hold on the estates for a period of about three years.

Relative to his usurpation, there is extant a document that was sent, in 1557, by Mary of Guise, the Regent, to Rose, the "Black Baron" of Kilravock. The latter chief is informed that forces are to be sent by land and sea to repress the tyrant of

Dunvegan; and it proceeds thus: "Forasmuch as it is not unknown to you how John Og MacLeod of Minginish, in the month of March last, cruelly murdered the umquhile Donald MacLeod, brother german to the umquhile William MacLeod, and took the house of Dunvegan, and withholds the same contrary to our dearest daughter's authority," etc.

Despite this threat, Iain Dubh was able to maintain his position as chief until his death in 1559, and it is said that, during the year he was in power, he had never ceased to plot against the life of Norman, the brother of that Donald he had murdered at Lyndale, and now the male heir to the chiefship. In this, however, he was foiled by the vigilance and the self-interest of Argyle.

We have already seen that the latter nobleman had succeeded in investing himself with the rights of feudal guardianship of the Heiress of the Isles; and, in order that he might translate that empty privilege into practical benefit to himself, he sought to marry her to a Campbell. Thus he was led to send some of the principal men of his clan with a strong force to Skye, in order to ascertain the attitude of the MacLeods to his project. The men of Argyle landed in Roag, where they sought the hospitality of MacSween, MacLeod's vassal in that district. MacSween communicated the news to his chief, who forwarded a cordial invitation to the strangers to pay a visit to Dunvegan Castle.

Eleven leading men of the contingent, accompanied by servants, set off, under the guidance of their host; and it was arranged they were to confer with Iain Dubh and his counsellors in the church of Kilmuir, in Dunvegan. There Iain feigned a sympathetic interest in their mission, which was that he should abdicate in favour of Mary, the rightful heiress, and he in return would be richly rewarded by the Earl of Argyle. Iain expressed his willingness to subscribe to these overtures; and an undertaking was ratified, there and then, whereby the Campbells were to be allowed to garrison the castle of Pabbay in Harris forthwith, and the whole of the estates were to be ceded to them on Iain's death.

The meeting was then adjourned, and the party repaired to the castle, where a sumptuous banquet awaited them. Each of the Campbells was sandwiched at table between two stalwart

MacLeods, and, at a certain stage in the proceedings, the attendants simultaneously placed before each of the guests a cup of blood. This was the preconcerted signal for action by their hosts, and, in a flash, every Campbell bent forward and collapsed, a lifeless mass, under the table. Some of their servants succeeded in making their escape; and, when news of the massacre reached the main body of the Campbells at Roag, a general scramble was made for their boats, and they betook themselves from the shores of Skye.

Having failed in this project, Argyle now tried other means in order to attain his end. He had for some time been in communication with Norman, brother of that Donald who had been killed at Lyndale by Iain Dubh, and now the oldest surviving son of Alasdair Crotach. His protegé was then most likely to make an endeavour to claim the chiefship, and, under the circumstances, he was sure to succeed. It would appear that this Norman had been a prisoner of war, and that, through the instrumentality of Argyle, he had been set at liberty. It was thus an easy matter for Argyle to win the favour of Norman, and it was but natural for the latter to consider the expediency of seeking the friendship of such an influential baron as Argyle. Hence it was that he entered into a bond of manrent with Argyle. It was written and confirmed at Dunure, on "1st Mar., year of God, 1559," and is as follows: "It is accorded . . . between ane noble and potent Lord, Archibald, Earl of Argyle, and Tormoid MacCleoid, sone to umquhile Alexander MacCleoid of Herre, as principal in this contract, and Hector Maklane of Doward, as principal favourar and Tutour to the said Tormod, in maner, forme, and effect, as after follows: Forsamakle as said Earle has redeemit the said Norman out of captivity, and enemies hands, wherein he was with Frenchmen (under Mary of Guise), yet, the said Earle obliges him to fortify, help, and set forward the said Tormod to wyne and jois the heritage and rowmis that pertenit to his fader and brother of Herre with the pertinentis, Tewedes, and Glenelg and all other bounds wherof they have auld titill of heritage, and sall be ane good lord and master to said Tormod in all his actiounes, and just causes, and to the effect that the same may come the better forward has delivered the said Tormod to the said Hector to be helpit, and fortefeit for the which causis, the said Tormod presentis, giffis, and grants his band of manrent, his faithful and true service with all his kin, and friends, and his heirs, and successors of the Herre, to the said Earle, and his heirs, and successors perpetually. He sall not marry but by the consent of the said earle whose avyss he sall tak in marrying ane wife, and being established in his rowmis and the Herre Tewedes sall pay the valour or the estimation of the availe of the wards, marriage of the Herre, and the laboures, and the travellis of the said earle to him, and to the said Hector to be divided as the said earle thinks cause between him and the said Hector, and it follows that if MacCleoid does not honour this band he will be content to be perpetualie defamed," etc.

Having succeeded in binding Norman MacLeod to his allegiance, Argyle then sought to wheedle the chief of the Clan Donald of Skye into his obligation likewise. This was to prove an easy matter for him, for MacDonald had no legal claims on the lands he occupied, either in Uist or in Skye. Indeed, as we have already seen, these possessions had been conferred on Alasdair Crotach in 1542, so that the chief of the MacDonalds was prepared to go far to meet the powerful lord of Argyle, who had promised to obtain the necessary charters for him. With all the cunning cleverness of which he was capable, Argyle induced Norman MacLeod to renounce his claims on the lands of the MacDonalds in his own favour; and he made good use of this advantage at a later period.

Meanwhile Norman, the third son of Alasdair Crotach, had returned to Dunvegan to claim the chiefship of the clan. He had powerful supporters in the Earl of Argyle, MacLean of Duart, who was his father-in-law, and Lord Lovat; and the most influential members of his own clan soon gathered around him.

As soon as the regnant chief heard of Norman's arrival, he shut himself up in his castle, whence it would not be an easy matter to dislodge him, if his associates only remained true. But that was not to be; for his principal warder, Torquil MacSween, was early in league with Norman, and he promised to admit him and his men on their arrival.

Iain Dubh discovered, too late, that most of his men had turned traitors; so that when Norman appeared before the castle, and the gates were opened by MacSween, he would assuredly have been captured but for the vigilance and the agility of four foster-brothers, who, by a secret passage, conducted him to his galley, and conveyed him to Harris. The fugitives made for the castle of Pabbay; but there they were refused admission, and were driven out of the island. Thence they resumed their sail south, and, after many vicissitudes, Iain made his way to Ireland, where, it is said, he became a lone wanderer, and, falling foul of one of the chiefs of O'Donnell, he was cruelly tortured to death by the latter's agents, who put red-hot irons through his bowels.

NORMAN, ELEVENTH CHIEF OF MACLEOD.

We have already seen that, when James V. made his memorable expedition to the Western Isles in 1540, the chief of the MacLeods, Alasdair Crotach, rendered as hostage his son, Norman. It has also been mentioned that the latter suffered exile with his brother, Donald, during the chiefship of William, the eighth chief, and that he had been a prisoner with the French. In some accounts it is stated that he had been a student at Glasgow University, and that it was then the blood-thirsty chief, Iain Dubh, had plotted against his life, but that the dark schemer had been circumvented by the vigilance of Argyle, who then interested himself in Norman's affairs.

As soon as the latter had established himself as chief, Argyle was once again in negotiation with him. Norman had owned the earl as his superior in 1559, and in 1566 MacDonald of Dunnyveg, on whom the wardship of Mary MacLeod had been conferred, surrendered his right to Argyle on his marrying that nobleman's sister.

In return for services rendered, Argyle induced Norman MacLeod to promise to pay him £1000 on the marriage of Mary; and the Skye chief was to benefit by an undertaking on the part of Argyle to cause "the Heiress" to surrender her claims on the estates to Norman, who was to receive a royal charter by the help of his patron. Thus it happened that, in 1572, James VI., acting on the advice of Argyle, granted a charter for the estates of the MacLeods, together with a portion of Trotarnish, and the bailliary of the whole of it, to Mary MacLeod, who, in the same year, acting no doubt on the advice of Argyle, conveyed her claim to

Norman, the chief. This agreement did not, however, receive the impress of royal sanction until the year 1579.

Some years previously, Argyle had succeeded in bringing about a marriage between Mary MacLeod and a kinsman of his own, a man named Duncan Campbell of Achinbreck; and, but for the unsuccessful attempts made by her descendants to have it recognised that the contract for the conveyance of the estates to Norman was invalid, because of intimidation on the part of Argyle, Mary MacLeod, "the Heiress of the Isles," passes finally out of the history of Skye.

In view of the obligations under which he had placed his clan with respect to his patron Argyle, but especially on account of a foul deed he perpetrated shortly after his accession, Norman estranged the allegiance of a large section of his people. With the view to render his position secure, he resolved to massacre all who might have a claim on the chiefship, attention to be directed principally on the male representatives of his own nearest relatives, and on all the descendants of Iain a' Chuil Bhàin.

To carry out the atrocious work, certain leading men of the clan were sworn to secrecy, each allotted his victim, and enjoined, on pain of death, to murder him on an appointed day. That a terrible carnage must have ensued is shown by the fact that Iain a' Chuil Bhàin alone had a family of twelve sons and four daughters, all of whose descendants, with one exception, were put to death. This was Norman, a nephew of the last chief, Iain Dubh, a young lad who was being fostered at the time in Harris by a cadet of his clan. The story is well told in "The MacLeods of Dunvegan," by Canon R. C. MacLeod of MacLeod, and its main features fall to be narrated here. Such was the attachment between the foster-father and his protégé, and the reverence shown to the ancient obligations of fosterage, that, despite the fealty he owed his chief, and the oath he had solemnly sworn to carry out his command, he found it impossible to steel his heart to murder the boy. He had been anxious and unsettled all that day, and, going into his house, sat down disconsolately, when the foster-son climbed on his knees and kissed him. This action by the innocent child forced the god-father to give way to convulsive sobs. On being asked by his astonished wife what ailed him, the only answer she could obtain was, "Teich, 's teasairg e, teich 's teasairg e"

("Fly, and save him"). She, interpreting the advice aright, left Harris, and succeeded in reaching Duntulm, where she placed the lad under the protection of his relative, Donald Gormeson, the chief of the MacDonalds. There the boy was brought up; and when he attained to manhood, the lands of Kingsborough were conferred on him, and the district remained in the possession of his descendants until it was given to the famous warrior, Do'ull Mac Iain 'ic Sheamuis, during the chiefship of Sir James Mor of Sleat.

It was probably in consequence of this massacre that the relations between the chief and his clan became so severely strained that, fearing assassination, he formed a bodyguard of twelve picked men, who watched over him day and night. The tests of elegibility for inclusion in this band were alike severe and searching. They had to excel in leaping, wrestling, throwing the stone, and in caber-tossing; and, if they showed their proficiency in these feats, they qualified for the final test, which was to wrench off with one hand a bull's leg at the knee. If they succeeded in this, they were admitted into the chief's circle, the "Buannachan" or "Bullies."

These warriors had many privileges, and were accorded a great amount of licence, for they were feared by all; and, being imbued with that arrogance that comes of untutored strength, they harassed the people by their extravagant exactions.

According to "The MS. History of the MacLeods," the organisation soon came to be disbanded, a happy consummation due to the activities of a herculean member of the clan called "Fionnlagh na Plaide Baine," or "Finlay of the White Blanket." This odd personage was invariably clad in a web of undyed cloth rudely girded around him as the "breacan-feile," or the kilt was worn by his contemporaries.

As Finlay was one day engaged in his customary pursuit of "rock"-fishing, the buannachan visited his house, and they began to make free with whatsoever they could find. Not content with the food with which they had been provided, they killed his best cow, and, having slashed off the choicest parts of it, they ordered his wife to prepare their dinner.

The bullying gargantuans were partaking of their meal just as Finlay returned from fishing, and, realising the situation, he proceeded, without ado, to the barn, whence he brought in a good ash-flail, with which he put an abrupt termination to the banquet. He wielded the implement with such telling effect that he terrorised the buannachan into abject submission. He drove them before him into an outhouse, where he stood threateningly over them, while his wife bound them by the method known in Gaelic as "Ceangal nan coig caoil"—*i.e.*, the ankles, wrists, and neck of each individual were brought together, and bound with one rope; and thus they were left to spend the night.

Early the following morning he deposited them severally in his boat, ferried them across Dunvegan Loch, and, after he had unbound them, he led them to the castle. As he was a *persona grata* with his chief, owing both to his eccentricity and his great brute strength, Finlay was admitted into the presence of his superior without any preliminary ceremonies. Being full of bitter feeling against the presumptuous parasites, he descanted vehemently on their malpractices, with the result that this institution of mercenary warriors was forthwith abolished.

And if all tales be true, the ghoulish nature of this cruel chief was not yet satiated; for another crime, as terrible in its barbarity as the slaughter of his relatives, must be imputed to him. That was the "Massacre of Eigg."

Several of the chiefs of MacLeod have been accused by historians of that atrocious deed—Alasdair Crotach; William, his son, by Canon R. C. MacLeod; Iain Dubh, the usurper, by Alexander MacKenzie, "The Clan's Historian"; but as the date now generally assigned to the event is 1577, it must have been perpetrated during the suzerainty of the present chief; and, from what we know of his character, we are forced to conclude that he was quite capable of committing it.

It is a surprising fact that there is no allusion to the massacre of Eigg in the works of contemporary writers, and that, so far, no reference to it has been found in the government archives; but, relative to this event, a document, "which has all the appearance of being authentic," was discovered by Skene, and it is quoted by him in the appendix to Vol. III. of "Celtic Scotland." In it occurs a statement to the effect that there are many caves under the earth in this isle (Eigg) which country folk use as strongholds, hiding themselves and their gear there. It happened that in March, anno 1577, war and enmity existed between the Clan Ranald and MacLeod of Harris. The people, with one, Angus John MacMurdoson, their captain, fled to one of the said caves, taking with them their wives, bairns, and gear; and MacLeod, apprised of it, landed with a great army, came to the cave, put fire thereto, and "smoorit the haile people thairin to the number of 395 persons."

THE TRAGEDY OF TRUMPAN.

In the township of Trumpan, in Waternish, there are the ruins of an ancient chapel, which is surrounded by the burial-ground of the district. The east gable and north wall are still standing; and in the latter is the doorway, which is a rudely pointed Gothic arch. There also may be seen the windows, which are of the loophole variety, and about two feet in height, but only four inches in width on the outside of the wall. The chapel is situated on a windswept plateau that terminates abruptly towards the west in a long steep escarpment above the shore of the Bay of Ardmore. It was dedicated to one of the early saints, and is accordingly called Kilconan. In it was enacted one of the most gruesome tragedies of which there is record in our island story.

Ever since the massacre of Eigg had been committed by the MacLeods, the Clan Ranald, to which the MacDonalds of Eigg belonged, had been secretly planning revenge. Hence it happened that, on a Sunday in the beginning of May, 1578, the MacDonalds of Uist put into the Bay of Ardmore, in Waternish, in a fleet of eight ships; and, under cover of a dense fog, landed there unobserved. This was all the easier for them, as most of the people of the district were worshipping at the time in the church at Trumpan; and when the MacDonalds discovered this, their hearts were filled with savage glee at the prospect of exacting the full meed of vengeance on the murderers of their kin in Eigg.

After they had beached their galleys, the invaders stealthily climbed the slope above the shore, and once they had attained the edge of the plateau, they made a dash in grim silence for the church. A detachment was detailed to guard the doorway, with strict injunction to allow none to escape alive, while the rest of the party began the dastard work of setting the sacred building on fire. This was no difficult task, and the thatch-covered roof was soon ablaze. The song of praise was abruptly hushed, for, in a moment, the doomed worshippers had realised their position. Soon the fire reached the timbers of the roof, and its crackling was drowned by the blood-curdling shrieks of deep despair which came from that house of woe. Prayers for succour to God were mixed with pleadings for mercy to men, only to be answered by the besiegers with such taunts as, "You have taught us how to smother a people"; and, "Remember the Cave of Eigg."

Before the roof had fallen in, a woman made a frantic effort to escape, and she succeeded in breaking through the cordon of men at the door; but, in doing so, it is said that one of her breasts was cut clean off by the swipe of a MacDonald sword. Concluding that she was mortally wounded, the destroyers paid no further heed to her, with the result that she managed to reach the nearest house, where she raised the alarm; and then she made for her own home, but succumbed to her injuries on the way at a place still pointed out as "Sloc Mhairearaid," or "Margaret's Hollow."

By this time the rising wind had cleared the fog, and the venue of the sacrilege could easily be located. All able-bodied men in the neighbourhood hurriedly made for the scene of desecration, only to be worsted in the fight by the invaders. But, as we say in Gaelic, "News of woe are borne on the wings of the wind," so that the whole countryside was soon ringing with tales of the deed of shame. When the chief heard of it in Dunvegan, his galleys were hastily unmoored, and manned by bands of eager and determined men.

It is, however, a far cry to Trumpan, and time lags tardily when men are impelled by a consuming desire to revenge a cruel wrong; but a strong following breeze sped the birlinns onward, and in a short time they arrived at the place of conflict. The triumphant MacDonalds had, by this time, overcome the weak resistance offered them by the natives, and they were engaged in rounding up the cattle of the district, when the reinforcements arrived from Dunvegan.

The chief had ordered the Fairy Flag to be taken out of its iron chest, and, as soon as the MacLeods encountered the forces of the enemy, the latter fled in panic towards the shore, for, as the story-teller puts it, "the very grass blades were changed to armed men as soon as the folds of the magic banner were unfurled to the breeze!"

When they reached the escarpment overlooking the shore, the discomfited invaders discovered, to their horror, that the ebbing tide had left their boats high and dry, and that a contingent of the MacLeods had already taken possession of them. As a last resort, they sought shelter behind a dry-stone wall, which had been built along the shore as a protection to the crops against the spray of the sea. Here they made a stand. Stimulated by that courage which is born of despair, they put up a brave, if ineffectual, resistance. But nothing short of annihilation would satisfy the avengers' lust for blood; and, with the exception of a small band which had succeeded in launching a boat, the MacDonalds were butchered to a man. Their bodies were laid in a row along the base of the wall, which was tumbled over them to obviate the necessity for burial. This battle is accordingly called, "Blar Milleadh Gàraidh," or "The Battle of the Destruction of a Dyke"; and it is said that during spring tides, when great billows are driven shorewards across the stormy Minch, breaches are made in the site of the old wall, and human bones are exposed to view.

In several parts of Skye traditional stories are still told of another battle in the district of Waternish between the MacLeods and the MacDonalds; and some writers have even gone the length of recording it as an actuality. It is called the "Battle of Waternish," and you will remember there is a famous piobaireachd of that name; but the incidents recorded of this battle bear such a close resemblance to those recounted of Blar Milleadh Gàraidh, that one is forced to the conclusion that they are merely variant accounts of one and the same event.

Our main difficulty in connection with this narrative is that Waternish then pertained to the MacLeods of Lewis, and that it had not come into the possession of the MacLeods of Skye until over thirty years after the date assigned here to the massacre.

We hear no more of Norman, the chief of MacLeod, until 1580, when he is in trouble with the government for his remissness in paying the teinds due to the Bishop of the Isles; and, in conjunction with several other landholders of Skye, he was "put to the horn" in the following year, and his lands were declared forfeited.

It is noteworthy that this chief, who is reputed to have been a student at Glasgow University, declares, in the numerous signatures in his name that are extant, that his "hand is leid at the pen by the notar, . . . at my command."

He was twice married; first, to Julia of Duart, and, secondly, to Janet of Argyle. By the former he had three sons, William, Roderick, and Alexander, designated of Minginish; and two daughters—Margaret, the famous "Cailleach Cham," the divorced wife of Do'ull Gorm Mor of Sleat; and Christina, who married Torquil MacLeod of Lewis.

The chief died in 1585, and was succeeded by his son, William.

William, Twelfth Chief of MacLeod.

This chief was a man possessed of a singularly attractive personality, and was a capable ruler. He had just entered upon the responsibilities of his office when a feud occurred between the MacDonalds of Skye and the MacLeans of Duart, which was to involve almost all the clans of the West Highlands for a decade in internecine strife. As William's mother was of the MacLeans, his clan was allied with the latter against the MacDonalds.

In 1586 he was "ordained" rebel, along with the other chiefs of Skye, for maliciously interfering with the Lowland fishermen who plied their trade around his shores.

On the 15th of January, 1588, he entered into a bond of manrent with MacIntosh of Dunachton, whose daughter, Janet, he married, and in it he engages to aid his father-in-law against all his enemies. This is a significant undertaking, in view of the fact that in the previous year MacIntosh had concluded a contract with Donald Gorm of Sleat to help the latter against such chiefs as MacKenzie of Kintail and MacLeod of Harris! It is interesting to note that in his contract with Dunachton he signs his own name, calling himself "Wm. M'Lloyd offe Dunvegane," and thus showing that he was able to write.

The period of his chiefship was a short one, for he died in 1590. He left as his heir a young lad named John, who was of delicate constitution, and died in 1595. In that year Roderick, known in history as "Ruairi Mor," who had acted as tutor, or regent, during the previous five years, became chief of the clan, and, as most of his life was spent in wars and feuds with the neighbouring house of MacDonald, it is necessary to bring the family history of that clan to date.

DONALD GORMSON, SIXTH OF SLEAT.

The heir to the chiefship of Clann Uisdein was a youth of tender years when his father was killed at the siege of the castle of Eilean Donain in 1539; and the government of the clan devolved on his uncle, Archibald, who, from the fact that he had been educated for the church, is designated, "Cleireach." Yet this cleric signs his name with his "hand at pen," a significant conceit, illustrating perhaps the fact that the art of writing was considered contemptible then by warriors and men of affairs.

Archibald was murdered, it is said, by a nephew of the name of John Og.

At that time the young chief was absent from Skye. It seems that the government, for some reason or another, was eager to secure his person; and, in order to obviate that contingency, his uncle took him to Lewis. Thereafter he was not heard of for several years, some surmising that he had been for a part of that time at the court of Mary I. of England; and hence his cognomen of "Sassunach."

As the clan was then leaderless, the crafty Earl of Argyle began to interest himself in its affairs. He had already considerably aggrandised his position by his dealings with the MacLeods, whose claims over Uist, Sleat, and Trotarnish he had induced their chief to transfer to himself. These lands were then occupied by the MacDonalds, but they had failed hitherto to procure a crown charter for them. Hence it was that, on the return of Donald Gormson, as chief of the clan, Argyle immediately entered into negotiations with him, premising the offer that he would secure for him that heritable infeftment for his lands which was now coming to be considered in the Isles the essential requirement of tenure.

Under the circumstances, there was nothing for MacDonald but to yield to the machinations of Argyle. He gave him his bond of manrent, agreed to pay him 1000 marks immediately, and 500 on the marriage of his ward, Mary MacLeod, with the proviso that Argyle had by that time succeeded in securing the necessary title-deeds for him. Donald Gormson signs this contract in 1567, "with hand at the pen led by the notar."

At that time the MacDonalds were engaged in a bitter feud with the MacKenzies of Kintail; the cause of the enmity lay in the relationship between the heads of these respective families to the House of Lewis. Roderick MacLeod, the chief of that island, had renounced the claims of his alleged heir, Torquil Connanach, the son of his first and undutiful wife, Janet MacKenzie of Kintail, who had eloped with MacLeod of Raasay; and her clan was determined to uphold the cause of their kinsman.

For a generation, and more, a state of war existed between the MacDonalds and the MacKenzies, owing principally to the opposition offered by the latter to the pretensions of the MacDonalds to the dignity of "Lord of the Isles," and the antagonism between the clans had been bitterly intensified by the fall of Donald Gorm before the walls of Eilean Donain Castle in 1539.

Even in 1553 we find that Donald Gormson is carrying war into their territory, harassing their friends, and helping their enemies. So fierce and frequent were his incursions, that the government was at length induced to interpose. He was declared an outlaw, and the injunction was given to take steps to prevent "MacGorme, ane broken Hielandman, from taking timbers for long-faddis out of MacKenzie's territory."

He seems, however, to have persisted in his forays, in spite of threats and warnings, for, again in 1554, his conduct, and that of his ally, MacLeod of Lewis, had become so outrageous that a commission was issued to Argyle and Huntly to proceed to the Isles, "to the utter extermination of Donald Gormeson," for his failure to preserve the peace, and to present hostages for his good behaviour. Eleven years later, however, he was restored to royal favour, when, in the abortive rising that took place on the marriage of Mary to Darnley, MacDonald took the side of the queen, and he helped to stamp out the rebellion.

Meanwhile the war between the MacKenzies and the MacLeods of Lewis went intermittingly on. When, however, the protégé of the latter, Torquil Oighre, was drowned in 1566, on his way to Skye, Donald Gormson sought the succession to the lands of Lewis in virtue of the claims of his mother, who was of Siol Torcuil. It would, indeed, appear that he had actually succeeded in securing his own recognition as heir from the chief of Lewis, for there is in the Dunvegan charter chest a document, dated 22nd of August, 1566, containing a strongly worded statement protesting against the claim of MacDonald to the lands of Lewis.

Once again the quarrel attracted the attention of the government, and, through the mediation of the regent, Murray, a reconciliation was effected. The contending chiefs of MacDonald and MacKenzie were persuaded to present themselves before the regent at Perth, when, on the 1st of August, 1569, they submitted their dissensions to arbitration. They agreed to refrain in future from attacking one another's lands; and Donald Gormson undertook to "cause Rory MacAllan, alias Nevynach, and all othirs, the said MacDonaldis kyn, desist fra trubbling, or invasion of the said Lord of Garlauchis landis, rowmeis, possessiones, in ony tyme cumin."

It is noteworthy that this agreement continued to be honoured (an unusual occurrence in the West Highlands), so far at least as the contracting parties were concerned.

Donald Gormson then joined the Protestant party; and he was held in high estimation at court. "For his good and faithful service," the government conferred on him a yearly pension of 1000 marks, together with the "fruits" of the vacant bishopric of Aberdeen.

But he was not to enjoy these privileges long, for he died in 1573; and he was mourned as a chief whose ability had raised his clan to a position of high honour, and great prosperity.

He left two sons, Donald Gorm Mor, his heir, and Archibald Clerk, whose son, Donald Gorm Og MacGhillespic Chleirich, the first baronet of Sleat, succeeded to the estates in 1617.

DONALD GORM MOR, SEVENTH CHIEF OF SLEAT.

Donald Gorm Mor was only six or seven years old when his father died; and, during his minority, the clan was placed under the captaincy of James Gruamach, the youngest son of Donald Gruamach and his second wife, a daughter of MacLeod of Lewis. The regent is sometimes called Seumas a' Chaisteil," or James of the Castle, from the fact that he resided at Castle Camus, in Sleat. He is reputed to have been a man of great common sense, an able soldier and administrator; but it would appear that, early in his career, the amicable relations that had existed between his predecessor and the government had been intermitted, and that the zeal for the Protestant cause, that had characterised the late chief, was now permitted to grow cold.

Thus we find that, at the very inception of his regime, he was in trouble with the government for his failure to observe his obligations to the church. In 1575 he was induced to sign a bond wherein he promised to remit to the Bishop of the Isles the teinds due for the lands of Sleat and of Trotarnish, the gist of the contract being as follows:—

"Obligation by James MacDonald of Castle Cames to John Bishop of Isles to pay teinds," among other items, "for the parsonage of Kilmoir in Slait, 17 marks; and for the Bishop's third part of said kirk, 15 marks." It was agreed that payment was to be made yearly, and that arrears were to be paid at any time between then and midsummer upon fifteen days' notice. The captain was to be exempt from payment when his lands happened to be "laid waste by enemies." "The payment of the males and dewties of the said landis and kirks in tyme cuming to be yeirly maid in Ycolmkyll, betwixt Petermess and Beltane; and, further, gif it happinnis the lands of Trouterness or any part thairof cum in my handis, oblisses us in lik maner to satisfie the said reverend fader and his factouris of his males and dewties within the samin, in so far as I sall have intromission therwith.

"At Dounsceiche, Sic scribitur, I, James MacConill growmeicht, with my hand at the pen, led by W. Cuming, notar publick, be speciale desirit thairto, because I cud not writ mysel."

Some commentators have interpreted this document as signifying that the MacDonalds were then recognised by the government as the legal possessors of Sleat; but, in spite of the promises made by Argyle in 1566, they had not yet been awarded a crown charter for that district. It is actually stated in the contract that Trotarnish also was not theirs by infeftment.

Despite the solemn promise he had given in 1575, James Gruamach is reprimanded by the government in 1580 for his remissness in paying dues to the church; and, again, in the following year, the government was forced to take drastic action against him, and several other landholders in Skye, for failing to honour their obligations to support the church. These men were: McConneill McNicoll of Trouterness; Donald MacGillespic

Cleriche, bailie of Trouterness; Hugh, his brother; Ronnal Calvoch thair, MacGilliechallum of Raesay, Tormoid MacCloid of Herreis, Donald MacDonald Gormoche."

In 1581 the government declared that the lands "that pertained to umquhile Donald MacGillespic Cleiriche, bailie of Trouterness, Huchone MacGillespic, his brother; MacConeill Maknicoll, officar of Trouterness; Nicol, his bruther; . . . James MacDonald, Gromiche of Castel Cames, are escheat, through being of the said persons ordourlie denunceit our said sovereign lord's rebels, and put to horn for non-payment of their fermes, mailles, teinds, and dewties which thai have intrometit with respectivelie."

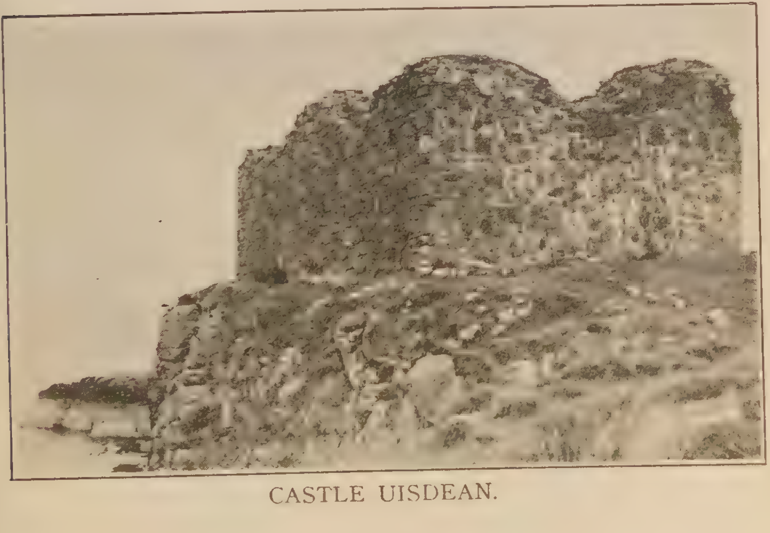
In the year 1585 Donald Gorm Mor assumed the chiefship; and, shortly after his accession, he was involved in a life and death struggle with the MacLeans owing to the conduct of a relative of his own, who was destined to bring many a woe on the clans of the west. This sinister personage was Uisdean Mac Gillespic Chleirich. He was a son of a former captain of Clann Uisdean, Archibald, the brother of the first Donald Gorm.

Donald Gorm Mor had a young brother also named Archibald, "The Clerk," and that fact has led many historians to assert that Hugh was the son of this man, and therefore the chief's nephew; but since, as we have already seen, this Uisdean Mac Gillespic Chleirich was in actual possession of lands in Trotarnish in 1580, five years before his reputed father's older brother, Donald Gorm Mor, became chief, it is apparent that the latter view regarding Hugh's paternity is untenable.

Hugh had a brother named Donald, whom some declare to have been a younger brother; but there are two documents extant in which mention is made of them both; and, in each case, the name of Donald takes precedence, signifying his seniority. This Donald was bailie of Trotarnish in 1580, and was reprimanded by the government for his remissness in paying church dues. It seems that he died in the course of that year, for in 1581 reference is made to "lands which pertained to the umquhile Donald MacGillespic Chleirich."

Shortly after this Hugh was commissioned by his uncle, James Gruamach, with the factorship of North Uist; and for a time he discharged his duties there with equity and fidelity. But

DUN AKIN, OR CASTLE MOIL.


CASTLE UISDEAN.

before many years had run their course, an event happened that was destined to show him in his true colours, and to make him for ever afterwards a marked man in the Highlands.

According to Alexander Cameron, there was situated near his residence a davoch of land that was at once the most fertile and the best cultivated farm on the whole island of North Uist. It was occupied by four brothers, "Clann a' Phiocair Mhóir," and the covetous Hugh had fixed longing eyes on it for many a month.

He approached the MacVicars with the allegation that the land originally belonged to his ancestry, and that therefore they should vacate it for him, the rightful owner. The brothers stoutly repudiated his claim, asserting that the land had been in the possession of their family for generations. Finding that suasion was of little avail, Hugh had recourse to other action.

At the end of harvest, when the corn of the last of the MacVicars had been gathered in, and all were met in the house of the eldest to celebrate the "Deir' Bhuana," or "Harvest-home," Hugh surrounded the place of festival with armed men, and, after a desperate struggle, succeeded in effecting an entrance. The brothers were killed, and the ruthless usurper took possession of their farm.

But his occupancy of it was peremptorily terminated, for, as soon as Donald Gorm Mor, the young chief, heard of the dastard deed, he sallied forth and drove the murderer out of Uist.

Thereupon Hugh entered into league with another native of Skye, a man named Donald "Hearach," and together they launched upon a life of piracy in the Hebrides.

In the course of their depredations they were once forced by stress of weather to seek the shelter of a cove in the north of the island of Jura. By a strange combination of circumstances, Donald Gorm Mor happened to make for an adjacent inlet that same night, as he was on his way to Islay with a large company of his leading men to visit his kinsman, Angus MacDonald of Dunnyveg.

That portion of the island to which the MacDonalds had betaken themselves belonged to MacLean of Duart; and the wily Hugh saw, in his chief's advent, material that would make a first-class plot. Accordingly, he raided a considerable number of cattle, shipped them on board his galleys, slipped his moorings, and before daybreak was well on his way for the north.

From Hugh's point of view the ruse was highly successful, for, on the following day, when the MacLeans heard of the foray, they naturally associated the depredation with the presence of the MacDonalds on their island; and, mustering a strong body of men, they attacked the strangers in the night, and, taking them unawares, slew sixty of them in cold blood. It is said that the chief himself would have shared the fate of his clansmen had he not been sleeping that night on board his galley. On his hearing in the morning of the atrocity that had been committed, Donald Gorm Mor left the island and returned to Skye, vowing vengeance on the MacLeans of Jura and all of their tribe.

Internecine feuds, conducted with fiendish bitterness, followed, and in a short time most of the clans of the West Highlands were embroiled in the strife. The MacKinnons of Skye and the MacLeods took the side of the MacLeans; the MacLeods, perhaps, because the mother of their chief was of Duart; but they were confirmed in their resolve in consequence of a special royal command issued to their chief on the 18th of September, 1585, urging him to supply the MacLeans with all his friends and force, "in resisting the violence and the persecution of Clan Donald."

Through the intermediary of the Campbells, a temporary cessation of hostilities was effected in 1586; and it is worthy of note that, among the hostages given to MacDonald of Islay by MacLean of Duart, mention is made of Alexander MacLeod, afterwards styled "of Minginish"; and of two sons of "Lachland MacKinnon of Strathordell," namely, Lachlan and Neil.

The truce was, however, but short-lived; for MacLean, who now considered MacDonald of Dunnyveg his principal opponent, took advantage of the absence of the latter to devastate his lands, irrespective of the fate of the hostages.

The king thereupon took measures to end the turmoil. Huntly was commissioned to effect a settlement, and a law was passed, called "The General Band," forbidding the chiefs from calling their men to arms without the royal prerogative, and imposing on the leaders of clans, and the bailies of districts, the onus of compensating those whom their vassals should have injured in property or in person. This was in 1587; and in that same year, despite the edict, Donald Gorm Mor marshalled his clan to the number of 2500, according to the MacLean sennachie, and, landing in Mull, defeated the MacLeans at Cranalich, but, taken unawares on the following day by a determined force of the local clan, MacDonald was signally routed at Leac Li, leaving many among the slain and more as prisoners.

The frequency of these destructive incursions was giving much concern to the government of the day, but they were averse to the use of armed force to stop them; and if duplicity and extreme deceit had been features of the contest between the Highland chiefs, the example set by the government, when an attempt was finally made to end it, was even more reprehensible still.

Messages were sent to the protagonists in the strife offering them instant remission, and requesting them to proceed to Edinburgh for the alleged purpose of devising measures for the better governance of the Highlands.

Confiding in the good faith of the government, several of the Highland chiefs unhesitatingly responded to the summons. Donald Gorm Mor of Sleat set off with the others; but no sooner had they arrived in the capital than they were cast in prison without a word of explanation. They remained under arrest until February, 1591, when they were liberated on payment of heavy fines, and an undertaking that they would provide hostages. The chief of the MacDonalds was mulcted to the extent of £4000, to cover arrears of rent and provide a fund for the reimbursement of those who might suffer loss at the hands of his clansmen. In addition, he had to procure a surety, the person whom he nominated being John Campbell of Calder, who was then acting as guardian to the young Earl of Argyle.

It could scarcely be expected that a lasting settlement would be based on an undertaking such as that which we have recounted; and we need not wonder that the Highland chiefs soon made light of the bonds to which they had subscribed as the price of their liberty. Hence it happened that, in the following year, when his sponsor, Campbell of Calder, was assassinated, Donald Gorm Mor considered himself free from further obligation to observe his contract; and it was known to the government that he was making extensive preparations for an expedition to Ireland, to aid the rebellious subjects of that country.

In order to test his fealty, he was cited to appear before the Privy Council; but he disregarded the royal behest, and a summons of treason was procured against him. At the same time, "Rory Mak Cloyd, tutor of Harrich," was commanded to find surety to the extent of 10,000 marks for the good conduct of his vassals; but the answer that the bold island-men made to these requests was to proceed, the following year, with a large armament into the North of Ireland to the assistance of Red Hugh O'Donnell, who was then in rebellion against Queen Elizabeth.

The expeditionary force consisted of 1000 stalwart warriors of the MacDonalds and the MacLeods; but their activities in Ulster were uneventful. After a stay there of only three days, Donald Gorm Mor returned to Skye, leaving his force behind him under the command of his brother, Archibald, the Clerk. Rory Mor remained in Ireland for some time longer; but it is clear that the Irish chiefs were not enthusiastic about the presence of the Islesmen in their midst. We gather so much from an undertaking by the Earl of Tyrone, to the Lieutenant General of Ireland, that the men of Skye would be dismissed his service; and, when that had been effected, King James VI. once again breathed happily, for his fears were growing that the action of his contumacious subjects might jeopardise his claim on the succession to the English throne.

In 1596, both Donald Gorm Mor and Rory Mor, who had then assumed the chiefship of the MacLeods, made their submission to the king, and were immediately restored to royal favour. Taking advantage, apparently, of the king's clemency, the chief of Sleat presented a petition for the heritable rights of the lands he occupied, and he succeeded in securing a charter for them all, except certain parts of Uist, and about eight merklands of Trotarnish, which the king reserved for the avowed purpose of placing Lowland tenants thereon, failing which Donald was to retain undisturbed possession of the whole peninsula. In return for these prerogatives, it was enjoined that he was to maintain Castle Camus in future for the reception of the king, or his representative, whenever they might be sojourning in Skye; and that "Hugh MacGillespic Chleirich should be pledge, and none other."

The government was eager to secure the person of that arch-riever, whose ruthless plundering was doing such damage to the trade of the West Highands. The local lieges had often to complain of his activities, while the fishers of Fife, who then plied their trade in the Hebrides, were seldom safe from his violent sallies. Even as late as 1600, a complaint was lodged against him by one "Thomas Inglis, merchant burgess of Edinburgh," for boarding one of his ships in Loch Shiel in Lewis, and "wrongously, violently, and masterfully, against all order of law or justice, reft, spuilzeit, intromettit with, and away took from them the said ship, with the whole merchandise, goods, and gear." Hugh is then designated as of "Waternes."

Some time after this, Hugh succeeded in inveigling himself into the good graces of his chief; and, to all appearance, he became once again a man of consequence in his native island. It was probably then that he began to build that imposing pile that is named after him as Caisteal Uisdein, or Hugh's Castle. The main shell of this unique building still stands, stark and solitary, upon a commanding promontory on the shore at Cuidreach. It is of the peel type of fort, roughly rectangular, 54 feet long, and 36 feet broad. Its walls are 7 feet 6 inches in thickness. There are no windows in the lower storey, save that in each of three walls is a mere loophole, about 4 inches wide on the outside, and about 2 feet high. The most striking feature of this grim structure is that the only doorway, which is situated in the north wall, is placed at a height of 8 feet 6 inches from the ground. Entrance could thus be effected only by means of ladders, which would be pulled up inside the fortress when not in use. Leading upwards from the side of the doorway there is a stone stair in the thickness of the wall, after the pattern of those in the passages associated with the duns.

The building of this fort was one of the last acts in the life of that man of dark intrigues. When the work was near completion, Hugh repaired in his birlinn to Uist, there to seek out all who might be ill-disposed towards their chief. Soon there gathered around him a band of considerable strength, that he meant to take to Skye. The ceremony of "house-warming" was soon due, but the ultimate purpose of the entertainment was known only to two, namely, Hugh himself and a shifty pander of the name of Martin from the east side of Skye, who had been hired to carry out the foul deed of murdering his chief on the night of the festival.

To conclude the final arrangements that pertained to the conspiracy, Hugh wrote two letters—one to his chief, inviting him to the "house warming," and the other to Martin, with instructions as to how he was to play his part in a role of deathless shame. But, as a frolicsome fate would have it, the traitor was hoist with his own petard, for the chief's letter was enclosed in an envelope addressed to Martin, and Martin's was despatched to the chief, and a courier sent with them to Skye.

Being now convinced beyond question of the malevolence and the treachery of his kinsman, the chief commissioned that warrior of renown, Do'ull Mac Iain 'ic Sheumais, to apprehend the conspirator, and to bring him to Duntulm dead or alive.

Having been apprised of his danger, Hugh betook himself to a fort called "Dun na Sticir," situated in a lake in North Uist, and accessible only by a secret ford. Though closely besieged by Do'ull Mac Iain and his men, he held out there for several weeks, and he and his band suffered terrible privations. They were dependent for food on the devotion of a neighbourly crone, who, with her sack of unground corn, repaired to their stronghold only on the darkest nights.

She had, however, gone to the relief of the starving garrison once too often; for, having stayed one night later than usual, she was noticed at daybreak in the company of Hugh, who, with a chivalry that seems strange in one so ruthless, was conducting her by the stepping stones to the shore of the lake. The position of the ford was thus marked, and Do'ull Mac Iain despatched some of his men to the attack of the fort while he himself remained with the main contingent.

After all the ammunition in the fort had been exhausted, an entry was effected by the besiegers, who seized and bound all its occupants except one tall person in female garb, who, with seeming unconcern, was busily engaged in the operation of grinding corn by means of the quern. This individual was questioned as to the whereabouts of Hugh, but so skilfully were the questions evaded, and so clever was the banter with which the men were entertained, that they delayed so long that their impatient leader was constrained to cross the ford, and he roundly scolded them for their untoward remissness in the discharge of their duty. His eagle eye soon caught the wily Hugh in the feminine attire; and, closing with him, a titanic struggle ensued, for these were two of the most powerful men of their age. "B' eutrom a cheum, bu trom a bhuille" (light his step, heavy his blow), the sennachie says of Hugh; but the combat ended in his being overpowered; and, securely bound after the ancient manner of "Ceangal nan cóig caoil," he was not loosened until he was brought before his chief at Duntulm.

With galling irony, the latter commended him for the ceremony of "house warming" at Cuidreach, but especially for the thoughtfulness and care with which he had laid his plans for his chief's entertainment on that momentous night; and he informed him that, as a reward for all his trouble, he would now remain a guest at Duntulm for the remainder of his days.

Without more ado, the warders carried Hugh down to one of the castle vaults, and the rusty bars were carefully driven home to make his incarceration sure. When his eye had grown accustomed to the livid light of his surroundings, he noticed in a corner of his cell a platter with a lump of beef upon it, and a pewter jug beside it. After the terrible fasts he had endured in Dun na Sticir, this kind of meat was welcome fare. He found it very palatable, if inordinately saltish; and, having partaken of a goodly portion of it, he stooped for the jug to slake his thirst. What was his horror when he discovered that it was empty! and, to add to his despair, were not those sounds he now heard made by masons in the act of building up the door of his prison? His surmise was only too well founded; and when, years afterwards, this vault was re-opened, there was discovered in it the skeleton of a mighty man, whose bony hand, and lifeless jaws, still firmly clasped a pewter jug, from which pieces had been crunched in the agony of a maddening thirst by one who has deservedly been called "MacMallachd Chloinn Uisdein" (the arch-demon of Clan Donald).

The Rev. Alexander MacGregor, who wrote "The Statistical Account" for Kilmuir, in 1841, says that the skull and thigh bones of Uisdean MacGhilespic Chleirich were preserved in a window of the parish church there, and that, owing to their extraordinary size, they were objects of curiosity for many an age, until "they were committed to the dust" in the year 1827.

In spite of the consideration that had been extended by the king to the chiefs of Skye at Edinburgh in 1596, and the concessions that they had there obtained, they proved themselves to be as troublesome as ever once they set foot upon their native heath. They cast their promises to the winds; and during that, and the following, year they had to be reminded frequently that they had failed to pay the royal dues. A final notice was sent to Rory Mor of Dunvegan, commanding him to appear before the king in Islay within two days, "on pain of treason and forfeiture"; and the reply of the island chief is worth quoting, as it helps to illustrate the character of that interesting personality. The letter was sent from Marvak, Harris, on the 22nd of September, 1596. He begins by telling the king how impossible it would be for him to go to Islay from Harris on two days' notice when his men are scattered and he is at the mercy of winds and "broken seas." But, as evidence of his loyalty to his king, he is prepared to meet "any your Grace will command me to fight hand in hand in your Grace's sight; I shall prove my pith on him. Beseeching your Grace favourably to let not use me with letters of treason, or traitory, I being in mind to serve your Grace under God, as my native king and master, to the uttermost of my life."

Despite these protestations of loyalty, Rory Mor was again in trouble with the government in less than two years after this. In 1597 an act was passed enjoining the Highland chiefs to repair to Edinburgh by the 15th of May, 1598, and there show their title deeds. This edict was issued because of the remissness of the chiefs in paying their yearly rents, for, it is stated in the Act, "they had made the Highlands and Islands, naturally so valuable from the fertility of the soil and the richness of its fisheries, altogether unprofitable either to themselves or to their fellow-men."

It would appear that many of the chiefs had either lost their charters, or were chary of producing them for fear of being deprived of them by the government; and when Rory Mor went to Edinburgh, in order to present his case before the Privy Council, he was subjected to such rancorous raillery, and irritating innuendoes, by Sir Robert MacKenzie, Tutor of Kintail, that the Skyeman dealt him such a blow as stretched him low on the floor of the council chamber. The words that brought "Roderick's vengeance on his foe'' were prompted by the assistance the men of Skye had given MacLeod of Lewis, who was fighting against the MacKenzies and their protégé, Torquil Connanach. The punishment for such an outrage in the ''regent's court and sight'' was death; but Roderick succeeded in making good his escape to Skye.

The upshot of this was that all his estates were declared forfeited—Glenelg, Harris, Bracadale, Duirinish, and Lyndale. A similar sentence was passed on Lewis, Waternish, Islay, and Trotarnish; and King James resolved to ''plant colonists'' from the Lowlands on these crown lands.

Accordingly, a company, called by historians the ''Fife Adventurers,'' was formed, with the avowed object of ''colonising'' the forfeited regions of the Western Isles, on the same principle as was to be effected in Ulster a few years later.

The Gentlemen Adventurers were ten in number, namely, The Duke of Lennox; Patrick, Commendator of Lindores; William of Pittenweem; Sir James Anstruther; Sir James Sandilands of Slamano; James Learmonth of Balcolmly; James Spens; John Forret of Fingask; David Home; and Captain William Murray. The stipulation with the government was to the effect that the company was to hold its lands rent free for the first seven years of its occupancy, and thereafter they were to pay a fixed rent. It is interesting to note that the valuation of Trotarnish, for the purposes of rent, was estimated at 400 marks.

Great preparations were on foot for the ''plantation.'' A beginning was made at Stornoway, where a town was being built; but, after many attempts to establish iteslf there, the company was finally forced to evacuate the island, owing to the persistent harassment administered by the natives, backed, as they were, by the MacKenzies of Kintail, and by the MacLeods, and the MacDonalds of Skye. No attempt was made by the company to establish settlements in Harris, Glenelg, Trotarnish, or in Waternish.

Towards the end of the century, Donald Gorm Mor was busy in his endeavours to interest Queen Elizabeth in his project to unite all the Highland chiefs in her service, and to revive the title of Lord of the Isles in himself. He declared that all the chieftains of Clan Donald were sworn to follow him, and that he was prepared to throw off his allegiance to King James VI. whenever she should consider the time opportune; that he would raise a rebellion "to fasche King James," and that he would keep her informed of the movements of her enemy, and his own late ally, the Earl of Tyrone; and, further, that he would acquaint her with the activities of the Jesuit priests in the Isles "in their pestiferous and un-Christian practices."

Elizabeth was not at the moment disposed to entertain these intrigues; but Donald Gorm Mor continued in his state of disaffection with the government for many years after that.

Rory Mor of Dunvegan was still under sentence of forfeiture, as seems to be indicated by a complaint he forwarded to the Lords of Council in June, 1599. In it he states that some of his vassals, on the way to the Lowland markets, had been waylaid in Glenorchy and robbed of their cattle; and that at the market of Glamis two of his clansmen, "Duncan Mac Ean Mac Gillechallum and Donald Mac Hucheon Vc Coneil, had been reft of twenty-four fat cows," the robbers having forged letters saying the "king had ordained they were to rob Rory's clansmen."

The close of the year did not see the end of these troubles; but, as the sequel belongs to the following century, we shall meantime leave them and survey the social conditions on the island during the last hundred years.

CHAPTER VI.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS, 1500-1600.

The Church.

JAMES IV. was indefatigable in his efforts to establish law and order among the Scottish Highlanders; and, in view of the numbers of these that followed him to Flodden, there is no reason to doubt that he won their allegiance and their respect. That he considered the church an efficacious means of reforming the lieges is shown by the large number of "presentations" he made to churches in Skye during the early years of the century.

Thus, in the year 1501, he conferred the church of St. Columba, at the head of Loch Snizort, and then the cathedral-church of the island, on one Sir Nichol Berchame, who was also made responsible for the administration of "the annexes and vicaragis of the same, viz., Kilmalowakin in Raasay, and Kilmory in Watternes." The ruins of the former are still to be seen surrounded by the old churchyard in Clachan of Raasay—the latter is probably the church of Kilmuir in Dunvegan. The successor of Berchame appears to have been "Sir Tormot MacFarsane," on whose decease, in 1526, the king presented Sir Donald Monro to the vacant see.

In Kilmuir of Trotarnish there officiated a "Master Mertyne M'Gillemertyne," who was rector of that parish from 1507 until 1536; and in the first year of his ministry we find that a letter of protection was granted to him by the king against such as might lay violent hands on his chattels, a significant precaution, indicative of the lawlessness that then prevailed. On the death of "Master Mertyne," in 1536, the succession devolved on Mr. "Rodoric Farquhar Hectorissone," and the roll of appointments is continued in "Rodoric Mac Clane, Elect of the Isles," on whose demise Queen Mary presented the rectory to "Sir Archd. McGillevray." After an interval of ten years, it was filled by Sir David Lawsoun, who, in 1573, was followed by John Fearquhayrson, and he in turn by John MacLane.

The site of the rectory of this district was on Kilmaluig Bay, on the north-east of Trotarnish; and it was dedicated to Moluac, the patron saint of Argyle. After the Reformation the parish church was built on the declivity above Score Bay, where the burial ground that once surrounded it yet remains; and as the new church was dedicated to the Virgin Mary, it was henceforth to be known as Kilmuir.

There was a chapel at Kilmartin, and another at Kilvaxter; the latter of which seems to have belonged to the nuns of Iona. In this connection we find that, in 1561, the abbot of Iona held one-half terunga of land in Trotarnish, called "Keilbakster"; and in 1574 the Prioress of Iona granted Hector MacLean of Duart the nunnery lands, including ten penny-lands of Kilvaxter.

About the beginning of the sixteenth century the rectory of Uig was served by Sir Nicolas Brachan, who demitted his charge in 1512, when James IV. presented Sir Donald Rede to the vacancy. After the last, a certain "Sir John MacCrummey" held the church, and on his decease, in 1552, Sir Donald Monro was elected as his successor. The church stood on the land now known as Clachan.

The rectory at the head of Loch Eynort, in Minginish, was conferred at the beginning of the century on Sir Neil Monro, on whose death, in 1511, James IV. presented "Master John Monro to the rectory of Mygnes, in the diocese of the Isles."

The church of Kilchrist, in Strath, the successor of Ashig, was settled on a Sir Kenneth Adamson in the year 1505.

In 1546 one, Sir Allan Macintosh, was the parson of "Wattyrnys"; and in 1566 a certain Malcolm MacPherson was granted the vicarage of "Durynthas," rendered vacant by the death of "Finlay Tormotsoun," who had been presented to the charge by the Earl of Argyle, then acting as the guardian of the "Heiress of the Isles." There was a chapel also at Trumpan (Kilconan or Kilcoan), and another at St. Congan's in Glendale.

Sir Donald Monro, the Dean of the Isles, says that, in the middle of this century, there were twelve "paroche kirkes in Sky inhabit and manurit."

Very little is known of the state of religion in Skye after the troublous times that succeeded Flodden; but it would appear that no great regard was paid for many years to the needs of the church.

On several occasions it is evident that chiefs and bailies alike made light of their ecclesiastical obligations, and stern warnings were issued by those in authority reminding them of their remissness in paying church dues. Thus, in 1575, an injunction was served on James MacDonald of Castle Camus, the captain of the MacDonalds of Skye, to pay as follows:—For the "Personage of Kilmoir in Sleit," 18 marks, and for one-third part of the said kirk, 15 marks, payment to be made yearly; and in the same note he is enjoined to pay arrears of taxes to the Bishop of the Isles. No attention seems, however, to have been paid to this request; and we find that in 1580 a summons had been raised against the captain, at the instance of John, Bishop of the Isles, for his failure to pay dues, and a similar citation is served on several other occupiers of land in Skye, *e.g.*, Norman MacLeod of Harris, MacGillichallum of Raasay, MacConneill MacNicol of Trotarnish; Donald MacGillespic Chleirich, bailie of Trotarnish; Hugh, his brother; and "Ronald Calvoch thair." All these persons were "orderlie denunceit and put to the horn," the lands of some of them were declared forfeited to the king, and in 1581 "made over" to John, Bishop of the Isles.

It is worthy of note that, in the proclamation of escheat of 1581, no mention is made of the lands of the MacLeods of Dunvegan, or of those of the MacLeods of Raasay, the surmise being that these chiefs had paid their dues and the arrears earlier in that year.

It may be interesting to mention certain of the districts that were set aside for the support of the church. They were the two Armadales in Sleat, one half the tirunga of Kilvaxter in Trotarnish, a portion of Snizort, and the islands of Raasay and Rona. The following churches and their lands were looked upon as belonging to the abbot of Iona; namely, Kilmore in Sleat, Kilchrist in Strath, and St. Columba's Church in Snizort.

We have already adverted to the loyalty of Donald Gormson, the chief of the MacDonalds of Skye, and the favours that he had received for his "faithful service" to the government. This has led many to suppose that the chief had joined the Protestant party; and, as he died in 1573, the Reformation must have reached Skye, through him, before that year. From the negligence that was shown to the church during the following decade, it would seem, however, that the new religion had not made much headway in the island, although its lack of progress then may quite conceivably be attributed to the transition stage through which people's minds were then passing, when the lords of Skye were probably imitating the example set them by the Lowland barons, and were encroaching on the lands of the church in order to add them to their own domains. There can be no doubt, however, but that the Protestant faith had established itself there before 1590, for in that year Donald Gormeson's successor, Donald Gorm Mor, was commanded by King James VI., and the Scottish Parliament, to suppress Jesuit activities in Skye, and "to punish those adversaries of the true religion presently professed within this realm"; and when, at the very close of the century, the chief of Sleat was making traitorous overtures to the Queen of England, and was professing his readiness to repudiate his allegiance to his king, he, at the same time, exhibits his zeal for Protestantism by declaring his intention to keep her informed of the "pestiferous and un-Christian practices" of the Jesuits in the Isles.

EDUCATION AND CULTURE.

Several instances have already been cited of the professions by chiefs of their inability to write their own names, and it is a noteworthy fact that, on their own recognisances, none of the seventeen chiefs who supported the rebellious Donald Dubh, in 1545, could write. Even men such as Gillespic Cleireach, who was being trained for the church until he was called upon to act as regent for his clan on the death of his brother, Donald Gorm; and Norman, the eleventh chief of MacLeod, who, according to some, had been a student of the University of Glasgow (though it is impossible now to verify that statement, as the extant roll of students of that institution does not go farther back than 1590)—these men, when they had occasion to append their signatures to documents, required to have their "hand leid at the pen." It has been explained that this was but a vain conceit in these men, who may have considered caligraphy an art unbecoming in a warrior; but although the art of writing may not have been practised by the chiefs, and may even have been despised by them, the surmise does not warrant the conclusion that these men were untutored, or illiterate, in the ordinary sense. Indeed, the evidence is far otherwise, for it can be shown that many of our island chiefs were men of noble culture, who genuinely loved the arts.

Thus, the seventh chief of the Macleods, Alasdair Crotach, evinced his interest in things spiritual by his generosity towards the church of St. Clement's in Rodel of Harris. He repaired it, endowed it with fertile lands, and it is said that he abdicated the chiefship several years before his death in order that he might devote the remaining portion of his life to meditation in the sacred precincts of that church. In that seclusion he is reputed to have produced a Gaelic translation of the psalms. Out of his regard for music, he allocated a large tract of land at Borreraig, in Duirinish, to endow the college of pipers there, over which the MacCrimmons presided for fully 200 years.

The chiefs also had their bards, who were held in the highest esteem. These men made it their duty, and considered it their privilege, to preserve and to popularise the poetry and the lore of the past. That a great body of poetry existed then goes without question, though only stray pieces have come down to us, chiefly through the compilation by the Dean of Lismore. The sennachie, as well as the bard, told and retold his tales of "the brave days of old," embellishing them, mayhap, according to the height of his own ideals, but contributing withal to the edification of his audience, and illustrating a marked trait in the psychology of the race. In his day, Bishop Carswell believed that such ancient tales as referred to the Tuatha de Danaan, the Milesians, and the Fingalian heroes, had a far greater influence on the imagination and the mind of the people than was exerted by the Bible.

The early chroniclers and historians paid little attention to the Highlands; and when they did advert to the conditions then prevailing there, their judgment was so warped by prejudice that their accounts are often worthless. "These writers," it has been said, "never spoke a favourable word of the Highlanders, much less of the Islanders," and the misrepresentations from which the latter suffered for many an age were simply due to the fact that they spoke a language that was not intelligible to the Lowland writer. Indeed, the existence of that language was considered to be the cause of all the actual and the alleged disorders in the Hebrides. Thus a contemporary writer says of James IV., probably the last king who knew the Gaelic language: "He speaks the language of the savages who live in some parts of Scotland and on the islands." In the reign of James VI. a determined onslaught was made on that ancient tongue, with the avowed object of discontinuing its use as the speech of the people; for, according to the royal edict, "it is one of the chief causes of barbarity and incivility among the inhabitants of the isles."

LAW AND ORDER.

The administration of justice was then vested in the chief of the clan, if he were loyally disposed to the government. If, however, as was often the case during that century, he was in a state of rebellion against the central authority, the government appointed bailies, one of whose duties was the preservation of order in their own districts; and these functionaries were sometimes engaged by the chiefs themselves for the execution of that office in certain portions of the island.

As we have already seen, King James IV. took a real and practical interest in the Highlands; and he was ever ready with useful schemes for the betterment of that part of his dominions. As an illustration of his aims for the restoration and the maintenance of good government in Skye, we have it on record that, in the year 1508, he decreed that the rents of certain parts of Trotarnish, namely, the tirunga of Kilmartin, and one half of the tirunga of "Baronesmore," which were then crown lands, should be earmarked for the purpose of defraying the expenses incidental to the education of a certain Kenneth Williamson in the study of law; and it was stipulated that the beneficiary should afterwards "exercise the same (administration of justice) within the bounds of the isle."

"According to the "MS. History of the MacLeods," this lawyer did return to Skye, where, among his other duties, he acted in the capacity of chamberlain for the whole of Trotarnish; and he was remembered for many an age because of the severity of his exactions.

Following the death of James IV. on Flodden, the administration of justice became lax in Scotland generally, and particularly so in the Western Isles. Indeed, during the three succeeding reigns, one is struck by the utter disregard that prevailed for the mandates of the government. Acts of brigandage, and of piracy on the seas, were rife; and the perpetrators of outrages such as these were subjected to no other penalty than the formal one of being "put to the horn," a procedure that seemed to have no terrors for them whatsoever. If they were in danger of arrest, they had merely to migrate elsewhere and their safety was assured. The islands of Pabay and Rona were then notorious as the rendezvous and the inviolable sanctuaries of the criminal and the unruly. The former is described by Dean Munro in 1549 as "full of woods, good for fishing, and a main shelter for thieves and cuthroats"; while of the latter he says: "It is full of wood and heddir, with ane havin for hieland galeys in the middis of it, and the same havein is guyed for the fostering of thieves, ruggairs, and reivairs, till a nail, upon the peilling and spulzeing of poure pepill."

Statements such as these, by men of responsibility, would no doubt convey exaggerated notions of the disorderliness that prevailed in the Isles, and they explain the extravagant accounts that were subsequently written by writers who knew of the Highlands only by repute. Thus, in "A History of King James VI.," written probably by a John Colvin, we find the following highly coloured invective against the inhabitants of the Isles: "True it is that the islandish men are of nature very proud, suspicious, avaricious, full of deceit, and evil invention, each against his neighbour by what way soever he may circumvent him. Beside all this, they are so cruel in taking of revenge that neither have they regard to person, age, time, or cause, so are they all addicted to their own tyrannical opinion that in all respects they exceed in cruelty the most barbarous people that has been since the beginning of the world."

It cannot, of course, be gainsaid but that there was some justification for the violent accusations that were brought against the Islesman of those times. Those strangers who came to prosecute the fishing industry, then so profitable in the Isles, were often subjected to grevious molestation, and were considered legitimate prey for unscrupulous demands. Anent the last, there exists an interesting document, dated 1586, in which a complaint is made by the Burghs of the Realm against the inordinate tariffs imposed on those engaged in the fishing industry by the leading men of Skye. They refer to fines for anchorage, dues on stances for huts and barrels, and the frequent thefts of nets and boats.

Those whose names are cited as guilty of these misdemeanours are "Donald Gorm in the Sky, MacLeod of Harris thair, John MacKinnon of Loch Slapin, Rory MacAllan of Gairloch, Hugh MacGillespic Chleirich of Troternish, and Duncan Rawsay of that ilk." All were summoned to appear before the Privy Council to answer the charges brought against them; and, when none obeyed, the usual ineffectual procedure followed, whereby they were "denounced as rebels and put to the horn." Again, in 1600, the proceedings before the Privy Council refer to a complaint, already quoted, by one Thomas Inglis, "merchant Burgess of Edinburgh, and Robert Sinclair, shipper in Leith," against "Hugh MacGillespic in Waternes and others." It was then stated that "Hugh MacGillespic, and others his accomplices, boding in fear of weir, came to the said ship, boarded it per force, and wrongously, violently, and masterfully, against all order of law and justice, rept, spulzeit, intromittit with, and away took from them the said ship, with the whole merchandise, goods, and gear." As usual, the accused failed to answer the charges, and they were "put to the horn."

In 1587 a very important law was passed, which made a real attempt at the pacification of the Highlands. This Act is commonly called the "General Band." It placed on the chiefs the onus of holding themselves responsible for the conduct of their vassals; and they were obliged to produce large sums of money as sureties, and out of this fund compensation would be made to such as were wrongously injured by their clansmen. Among other names appended to this document are:—William MacLeod of Dunvegan, Harris, and Glenelg; Malcolm MacLeod of Raasay; and Lachlan MacKinnon of Strathaird.

AGRICULTURE.

In that age, and for several generations thereafter, all the activities of the clan were carried on purely on a communal basis, so that while one section of the people was detailed for the purposes of defence, the other, and the larger portion, was engaged in the cultivation of the soil and in tending the flocks. There were then, of course, no farms as we know them later, and fewer animals were reared, the number being determined by the needs of the people themselves, for, as yet, there was no market for the surplus stock. Owing, however, to the wide range of its pastures, and the reputed fertility of the soil, more cattle were maintained then in Skye than in any other area of similar extent.

The cultivated land was not then divided from the common pastures by any manner of protective boundary; and men had to guard the growing crops from marauding animals by turns. The chief cereal grown then, as now, was oats; and, according to a statement by Dean Monro, Skye was famous both for the abundance and the excellence of that particular crop.

The operation of tilling was done by means of the spade, although an occasional plough, of very primitive design, was utilised. As a matter of fact, two ploughs, of different form and purpose, were then pressed into service for the work that was later done by one. These were the "crann ruslaidh," which merely cut a strip of soil perpendicularly of the required breadth; and the "crann rusgaidh," whose function was to cut the ground horizontally, and to turn it over. The combination of the two implements was effected later.

The method of reaping that then obtained, and was continued in certain parts for two centuries afterwards, was to uproot the stalks of grain when ripe. The ears were then burned off the sheaves, and the straw was used as thatch to cover the roof of the dwelling-house, so that after it had been saturated with the peat-smoke of winter fires, it might be used to manure the soil in the following spring.

In addition to oats, barley was also grown, though not in equal quantity; while good crops of flax were produced. The linen was manufactured in the homes of the people, as was also the silky wool of the indigenous sheep, "a' chaora bheag," which was so small as seldom to exceed 30 lb. in weight. Its delicious mutton was consumed locally, for few of them were exported.

Both sheep and cattle were, however, used in whole or part-payment of rent, that of "fearann peighinn," or penny-land, being as follows:—6 sts. meal, 6 sts. cheese, 1 cow, and eke in money 4s 2d; the total value being estimated at £1 4s 2d. Twenty penny lands comprised the "terunga" (tir-unga or ounce land). Sub-divisions of the penny land were the "lephin," or halfpenny land; and feorling, or farthing land, with its impost of 3 sts. of meal, and an equal quantity of cheese. The farthing land was commensurate with the lot called cowland. It is not easy to define the measure called "merkland," but it would seem to be co-extensive with the quarter land or four penny lands. In an account written in 1577 for the information of King James VI., it is stated that the rental for a merkland in Trotarnish was: 2 bolls of meal, 2 bolls of malt (*i.e.*, barley), 4 mairtes (cows), 16 wedders, and 16 dozen poultry.

In this document there appears a reference to the district of Sleat, of which it is asserted that "it is occupied for the most part by gentlemen; therefore it pays the old duties—that is, of victual butter, cheese, wine, ale, and aquavitæ, as much as their master may be able to spend any night *on each merkland*, although he had a company of 600 men." This last exaction refers, of course, to the practice, then in vogue, of supplying the chief with food and shelter for himself and his retinue without compensation when on a tour of his estates; and it was called "cuid oidhche," or "night's portion."

Finally, we find in this account the statement: "There is many woods in all parts of Skye, specially birkis (birch) and orne (oak), but the most wood is in Slait and Trotternish. There is ane wood in Slait 8 miles long, with many deir and roe, and it is very fertil in all kinds of bestial and corns.'

The assertion concerning the extensive "woods" of Skye is probably an exaggeration, for there is abundant evidence that the amount of timber produced on our island was never sufficient for local needs, and that, in order to supply the deficiency, it was necessary to make frequent descents on the mainland. Thus, about the middle of the century, an injunction was served on Donald Gormeson, to restrain him from taking timber "for long faddis (galleys) from the MacKenzie's territories."

TRADE.

Communication with the outside world for the purposes of commerce was then in its infancy, so far as Skye was concerned; and, as has already been shown, there was scarcely any endeavour made to dispose of the surplus stock outside the island. A few commodities were, however, exported, and these consisted principally of fish, hides, and wool. Of the first, it is said in the account of Skye, written in 1577, and from which we have already quoted, "There is great plenty of salmon and herring"; and Dutch and Lowland fishermen reaped lucrative harvests out of the abundance of the herring around our shores.

About 1580 a licence was obtained from the crown for the institution of a fair at Portree. The market was held there twice a year, from Wednesday until the Saturday, when the varied products of the island were exposed for sale—meal, butter, cheese, poultry, sheep, cattle and horses, hides, wool, linen, and dried fish, especially herrings and salmon. Of the latter there was great abundance, for Dean Monro says: "There is gud tak of salmont upon five watters principally, to wit, the water of Sneisfort, Sligachan, Strathwardill, Ranlagallan, and Kilmtyne." The commodities brought to the market were bartered almost wholly among the natives themselves, for it was seldom then that a stranger came to make purchases. The money equivalent of a milch cow was estimated at 10/-; while a stone of oatmeal cost 8d, and an equal quantity of cheese was valued at 1/-.

Towards the end of the century, a tentative beginning was made in the exportation of the native black cattle; but nothing of note was yet accomplished until, towards the middle of the following century, Dou'll Mac Iain ic Sheamuis, the first of the MacDonalds of Kingsburgh, set the vogue in this trade that was to prove so lucrative to the island for close on two hundred years.

HABITS, PASTIMES, AND MANNER OF LIVING.

The people were then fond of hunting, and game was free to all, and was plentiful. Writing about 1543, John Elder says that the principal animals then hunted in the Highlands were deer, grouse, foxes, and wolves; while, as has already been shown, mention is made of the deer and the roe as being plentiful in Sleat and elsewhere in Skye about the year 1577.

There were then two sections in the community, namely, the overbearing warriors, who defended the clan and fought its battles, and the despised peasants, whose duty it was to till the soil and tend the stock. When they were not engaged in raiding or in war, the former spent their time in idleness, as it was beneath them to engage in the menial labour of cultivating the ground; while the latter, who were the weaklings of the clan, for the most part aped the warriors, and, in their counterfeit manner of life, were aided and abetted by their wives, who, for the sake of appearance, did all the drudgery, while their husbands, if they were allowed to take part in work at all, did light labour only; but most often they dallied their time in idleness, or joined the privileged clansmen in their trials of strength and skill.

These contests took many forms. There was wrestling, swimming, leaping, running, casting the stone, and archery. Canon R. C. MacLeod of MacLeod tells of an occasion when in the chiefship of Norman, eleventh of his line, many of the Highland chiefs, with a tail composed of their best athletes, assembled at Dunvegan, there to hold high carnival. After the contestants had displayed their prowess, it was noticed that no athletes from Dunvegan had taken part in the competitions. The MacLeod chief was twitted on his neglect of manly sports, and he excused himself on the ground, as he alleged, that as the host it would not be seemly that any of his men should eclipse the other sportsmen; but now that aspersions had been cast on him, and on his clan, he would show what his men could do. His best, however, he would reserve until he had discovered how his meanest would acquit themselves. He accordingly brought forward a deformed tatterdemalion, one of the name of "Paul Crupach," a short, thickset fellow, with thews like an auroch bull; and he was pitted against the best of the strangers. The marvellous versatility of this diminutive giant was soon apparent; and at the end of the day it transpired that he had overcome the best of his opponents singlehanded.

Now we know of a Pòl Crubach, the son of a MacLeod of Lyndale, and a poet of great merit; but he flourished about the middle of the following century. His best known work is "Iorram na Truaighe," composed on the death of John, the son of Sir Rory Mor, in 1649; and tales are still told in Skye of his abnormal strength.

DRESS.

The breacan-feile, or tartan plaid and kilt combined, was then worn by the men. It was belted by a leathern girdle around the waist, and was plaited to the knees. Under it they wore a saffron shirt ("leine chroich"). That part of the "breacan" that covered the upper portion of the body was secured at the breast by a bodkin of bone or silver, according to the rank. In the year

1594, when a force of 500 MacDonalds and an equal number of MacLeods set off on an expedition to Ulster to aid Red Hugh O'Donnell, who was then in rebellion against England, mention is made of the spendid physique of the men, and their garb is described as follows: "The outward clothing they wore was a mottled garment with numerous colours, hanging in folds to the calf of the leg, with a girdle round the loins over the garment."

The women wore a cloak called the "arisaid," which extended to the heels. It was white, with narrow bands of diverse colours, and, like the garment worn by the men, was fastened by a buckle of silver or of brass. It was drawn in at the waist, around which a leathern belt was worn; and the latter was often gaily decorated with precious metals or stones. The women wore also a bodice-like garment of scarlet, with long flowing sleeves that were closely fitted at the wrists. They were very fond of ornament, and when, on the days of the fair, they cast aside their working clothes and went to Portree in their gayest attire, they presented a picturesque sight. Over her hair the maiden wore the snood, while the married lady covered her head with a kerchief of fine linen.

WEAPONS.

In the account of the expedition of the Skyemen to Ulster, to which reference has previously been made, there occurs an interesting description of the weapons that were then in use. Of these it says: "Some had horn-hafted swords, large and military, over their shoulders. When a man did strike with them he was obliged to apply both hands to the haft. Others were equipped with bows, well-polished, strong, and serviceable, with long twanging hempen strings." The common soldier was, of course, equipped with the bow as his principal weapon; while in his belt he carried a large dagger, sharpened on one side only. When they were engaged in battle, the fighters wore a covering of linen, well bedaubed with pitch, and over it a chest-protector of raw hide.

In the account of the conditions that prevailed in Skye in 1577, it is stated that "Slait could raise 700 men and Trotarnish 500"; and on the 20 merklands of Waternish, MacLeod of Lewis could muster a force of 200 able-bodied men.

CHAPTER VII.

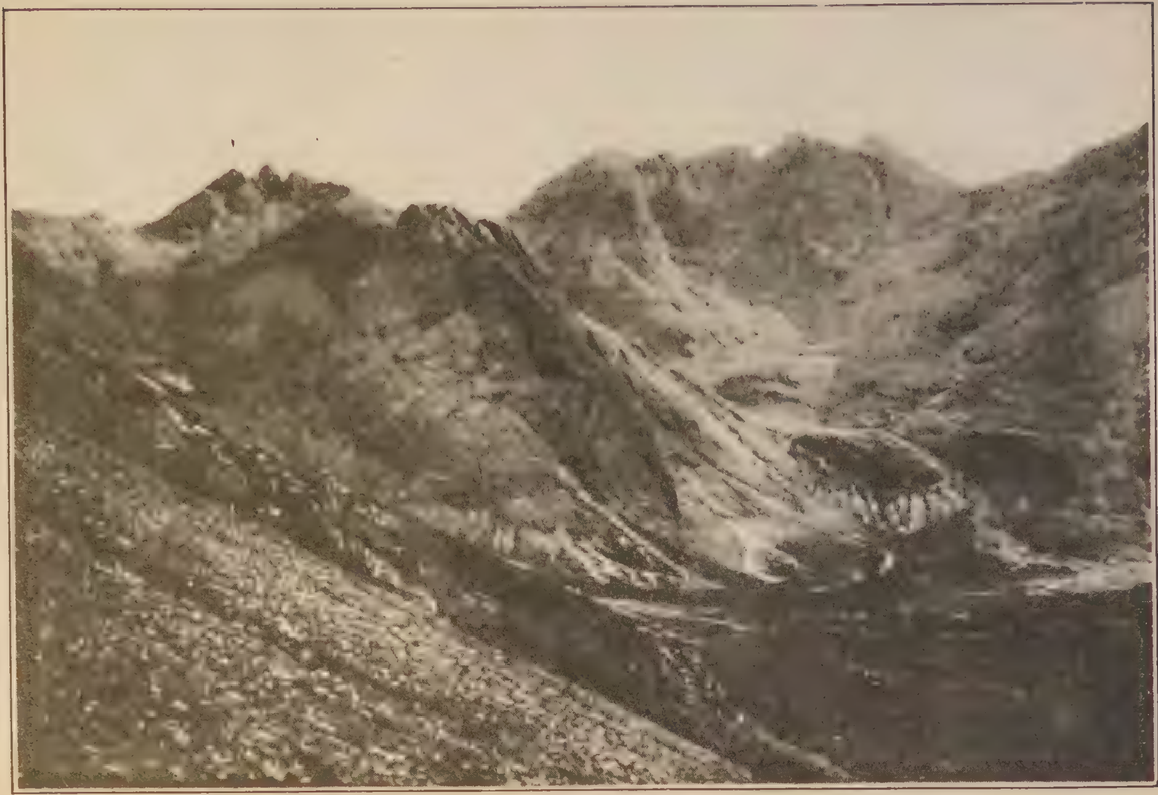
FAMILY HISTORY, 1600-1650.

THE beginning of the seventeenth century in Skye saw the two great clans of the island engaged in a war that was marked by intense bitterness. It is traditionally called "Cogadh na Cailliche Caime," or the "War of the One-eyed Woman"; and the cause of it is said to have been as follows:—

Donald Gorm Mor, the chief of the MacDonalds, had contracted a conjugal agreement, called hand-fasting, or trial marriage, with Margaret, the sister of Rory Mor, the chief of the MacLeods of Dunvegan. This lady, having sustained an injury to an eye, seems, in consequence, to have lost favour with her partner, who determined to be quit of her. Accordingly, when the contractual period of a year and a day had expired, MacDonald callously drove his mistress from Duntulm, and, heaping insult on the indignity, had her mounted on a one-eyed nag, escorted by a one-eyed groom, and followed by a one-eyed mongrel dog.

The arrival of this pathetic band at Dunvegan naturally aroused the bitterest passions in the heart of MacLeod, but for the time being he wisely curbed his surging rage, and despatched a courier to MacDonald demanding an explanation of his insulting conduct, and requesting him to take his wife back again. This the latter blankly refused to do, and, having succeeded in securing a divorce, he married a sister of MacKenzie of Kintail, thus forming an alliance with Roderick's most bitter foe.

There could, of course, be but one consequence of an action such as this; and Rory Mor observed, with vengeance in his voice, that although the making of a bonfire had been overlooked in celebration of the union, he would take very good care that a mighty conflagration would mark its dissolution; and he promptly carried his threat into execution, with the result that a cruel and disastrous war was waged between these clans for a period of almost two years.



COIRE NA CREICHE.

Raids and counter-raids were made into each other's territories; mercy was shown to none, and, according to Sir Robert Gordon, "their peoples were reduced to such dire extremities that they were forced to eat horses, dogs, cats, and filthy vermin, in order to sustain life." Rory Mor carried a raiding expedition into Trotarnish, burning and slaying wherever he went. The MacDonalds retaliated by attacking MacLeod's lands in Harris; and, having sated their desire for revenge, returned to Skye just when Rory Mor had set off for MacDonald's lands in North Uist. On hearing of the invasion, the natives of that island collected as much of their stock as they could, and, with their goods and their families, sought sanctuary in the church called Kiltrinaid, in Carinish. Rory Mor made Rodel his base of operations, and thence he despatched his cousin, Donald Glas, the second of the family of Drynoch, and a man of great bodily strength and vigour of mind, to raid the island with a goodly band of determined warriors. An extensive "round-up" of the whole island was made, so that scarcely a hoof remained on mountain or on machir. The spoilers finally approached Carinish, and, after having overpowered the weak resistance offered them, and taken possession of all the cattle and the gear, they decided to rest there for a few days before they returned with their booty to Harris.

But that they were fated never to do, for a young cadet of the MacDonalds, by name Do'ull Mac Iain 'ic Sheamuis, who then farmed the Island of Eriskay, heard of the depredation that was being wrought on his kin, and he resolved to put an end to it. This man played such a notable part in this incident, and its sequel, that a brief sketch of his life, to this point, is necessary here.

Do'ull Mac Iain 'ic Sheamuis was the grandson of James Gruamach, who was captain of Clann Uisdean during the minority of Donald Gorm Mor. He was born in Moidart, his mother being a MacDonald of that district, his father, John "of the Castle," being at the time a hostage in Edinburgh. At the age of four or five years, young Donald was brought to Castle Camus, his ancestral home, where he lived till he was about eighteen years of age. He was then invited by his godmother, a lady named Nic Cosheam, who was very fond of him, to take possession of her farm, which was on the island of Eriskay, in the Kyle of Barra.

There he grew up to be an industrious man, of exemplary character, and of noted strength. None in the adjacent isles could cast the stone so far as he, or vie with him in the race, or in the leap; and worthily he deserved the compliment paid him by the sennachie: "A neart mar dharag na coille, a chumadh cho direach ri giuthas na beinne, 's a chorp cho subailte ri cuilc nan lòn" (His strength like the oak of the forest, his form straight as the mountain pine, and his body lithe as the reed of the marshland). Few could shoot the arrow with such dexterity as he. He was a fencer of skill; and his "Lainnire Riabhach," as he termed his sword, had often taken a terrible toll of the foe in many a hard-fought fight.

It was this young Achilles, then, who heard of the plight of his clansmen in Uist, and set off from Eriskay early one morning with twelve manly fellows, and made for the north. A wayfarer who met them at a ford was accosted by Do'ull MacIain with the words: "That latha buana foghair agam ort" (You owe me a day's harvesting). "Ma ta," returned the other, "chan fhada bhitheas," and he turned on his heel and joined them. Shortly afterwards they overtook another man, who was carrying peats for a neighbouring farmer. "What wage do you get?" asked MacDonald. "Five pence," was the answer. "Join us," said his questioner, "and you will win a better wage, and honour forbye." The peat-carrier became a recruit, and soon another was added to the band; so that it now numbered sixteen men.

When they arrived at Carinish, at dawn the following day, the "Children of the Mare," as the MacLeods were called, were afoot, and were partaking of a meal preparatory to their leaving for Harris. MacDonald divided his men into three companies. Five he stationed behind a hill, about a mile from the church; five others about half a mile nearer it; and he enjoined the remainder to proceed to within arrow-range of the sanctuary, to take steady aim, and to make sure that each brought down one of the foe. They were then rapidly to retreat to the point where the second company was stationed, make a stand there, discharge their arrows among their pursuers, and then run to the hill occupied by the band that was farthest from the church, where all were to make a determined stand together.

The ruse worked admirably, for when the MacLeods noticed the despicable company that had dared to attack them, they made a sortie without caution or order, like sheep from a fold, and five of their foremost were soon brought to earth. Twice as many were despatched when the MacDonalds halted with the second party, and over thirty of them had already fallen when they came within range of the full force of the MacDonalds now posted on the hill.

There the MacDonalds discovered that their bows shot farther than those of the enemy, and the advantage was quickly put to good account, for, while the arrows of the latter were falling harmlessly short, those of the MacDonalds were doing dreadful execution in the opposing ranks.

The slaughter of the MacLeods had soon assumed such proportions that the two parties was almost equal in number; and, confident that victory now lay within their grasp, the exultant MacDonalds pressed closer on the foe. But they paid dearly for their rashness; for, an arrow was sunk in MacIain's thigh, and he was incapacitated from taking further part in the contest. The mishap did not, however, daunt his men, who now set upon the foe with redoubled vim, and the MacLeods were soon in hopeless flight. Their leader, Donald Glas, and those who fled with him, were killed on the shore at Baleshare, at a place called "Oitir Mhic Dhomhnuill Ghlais" to this day; and only two of the MacLeods survived the combat.

Meanwhile his wound was causing Do'ull MacIain great pain, despite the care of one of his comrades. It is said that his godmother had no sooner ascertained the reason why he left home than she followed him; and she arrived on the north shore of the island of Grimsay just as the fray was ending. She shouted loudly at the ford. Her godson heard, and knew her voice, and he immediately ordered the man who was attending him to ferry her across to the main island; and right worthily she repaid the trouble.

It is said that it was she who extracted the arrow from the flesh; and, as she was performing the operation, she caused a band of young women, who had gathered around her, to sing the chorus of a lilt she was composing, in order to divert the attention of the young warrior from the pain of his wound. A portion of the extemporised song is as follows:—

"Mhic Dho'uill, a laoigh mo chéille,
Hi ri ri ri ho u;
Gur moch a chuala tu m' éigheach,
Ho ro ho hi ri;
Chall eile bhó hi o ro ho.
Fhreagair thu 'n tràigh 's an là ag glasadh;
Hi ri ri ri ho u;
Bhuail thu màim air Siol a' Chapuill,
Ho ro ho hi ri;
Chall eile bhó hi o ro ho.
Siol na làire, blàire, bacaich," etc.

It seems that "Nic Còiseam" was as skilled in the art of the surgeon as she was in that of the bard, for, within three weeks of the fight, her patient set sail for Duntulm to acquaint his chief with the affair at Carinish, and to enlist in his service. The galley was half-way across the Minch when it encountered a violent gale, with blinding snow-showers, from the south-east, so that no course remained but to slacken sail and run before the wind until, as fate would have it, they landed at Rodel, in Harris.

The storm-stricken voyagers were now literally "between the devil and the deep sea," for they learned that Rory Mor was still at Rodel, with a strong body of his clan. It happened that the Chief of the MacLeods had as his page a pert and prying youth of the name of MacCrimmon, who was in the relation of foster son to Do'ull MacIain; and the attachment between the two was consequently stronger than any other bond of kinship could be. As soon as MacCrimmon heard that his foster-father had been driven on the coast of Harris, he was at his wits' ends to devise means for his safety. As the storm was wildly raging, Rory Mor had occasion to look outside; but he soon recoiled from the open door as the freezing gust swept wisps of crisp snow into the warm chamber he had left. "Pity," said he, "those who have not the shelter of a roof on such a night as this. It is so wild and cold that I would extend the hand of hospitality to my most bitter foe were he in need to-night."

"I take you at your word," broke in the forward page. "Do'ull MacIain 'ic Sheamuis is in a cave by the shore of Rodel, and great is his need of shelter."

"Invite him hither," said the magnanimous chief, "and let none put a finger on him, or on any of his men, so long as they are under my roof."

Thereupon MacCrimmon bounded to the shore; and when he returned with the MacDonalds, the MacLeods had just sat down to supper. A place was made for the strangers at the table, and threatening looks were often exchanged between those who sat below the salt.

At last his feelings got the better of one of the MacLeods, and he remarked: "Three weeks to-day happened the affair at Carinish." Instantly every man was on his feet, and dirks flashed in the flickering light of the candles. Rory Mor jumped up at the head of the table, and with shame in his countenance, and rage in his voice, commanded his men to sit down. He was at once obeyed, and he roundly scolded them for their disgraceful breach of etiquette.

His action created a lull for the time being, and when calm reigned once again he facetiously asked MacDonald whom he intended to strike first had the parties come to blows. "Had any of my men been struck in your house," replied MacDonald, "I would have sought the best bird in the covey, and that is you."

When it was time to repair to rest for the night, pallets were laid in a large barn for the MacDonalds, but their leader was invited to sleep in a room adjoining that of the chief. He, however, declined the offer, remarking that it had never been his custom to separate himself from his men in a hostile country, and he was not disposed to change his habit then, especially after what had transpired earlier in the night. He proceeded, therefore, with his men to the barn, and the company lay down to rest.

Some time before daybreak, MacDonald was suddenly awakened; and, looking up, he saw MacCrimmon bending over his bed. The boy hurriedly told him that a conspiracy was afoot to set the barn on fire, and that, as the weather was now favourable, they should resume their voyage.

Without further ado, the MacDonalds made for the shore, where their galley was soon in trim, and a course set for Skye. They had barely left the land when they noticed, in the gray light of the morning, that the barn where they had spent the night was in flames. Whereupon one of the crew tuned up his pipes and played that challenging air, "Tha an Dubh-thuil air Mac Leòid."

It would appear that Rory Mor did not remain long in Harris after this episode, but that he went to Argyle to seek counsel, it is said, and, what is more probable, to obtain help against the MacDonalds. In any case, he was away from home when an extensive raid was made by his enemies over his lands of Minginish and Bracadale. Great destruction was done to houses and crops, and a large number of cattle was rounded up. The creach was gathered in that awesome corrie on the western slopes of the Cuilin Range, where a halt was made until all the raiders should reach the rendezvous before they began to drive the booty home to Duntulm.

The locality has since been known as "Coire na Creiche," or the "Corry of the Foray," and there the MacDonalds were set upon by a large body of the MacLeods, with reinforcements from the MacLeods of Lewis. The pursuers were led by a brother of Rory Mor, Alexander Og of Minginish, who had been left in charge of the affairs of the clan; and it is on record that he was clad in mail.

It was late in the afternoon when the issue was joined, and during that night the lonely echoes of the surrounding peaks were in constant agitation as the triumphant yells of lusty conquerors mixed with the death-shrieks of vanquished foes.

After the tide of battle had swirled this way and that for some considerable time, it was noticed that the ranks of the MacLeods had been severely thinned in the course of the combat. Many of the MacDonalds also had fallen, but the leader of the MacLeods, together with thirty of the most prominent members of the clan, were taken prisoners. The MacLeods were routed. The battle of Coire na Creiche is memorable as being the last clan-fight that was fought in Skye. It took place in the year 1601.

Among the victorious MacDonalds, tradition avers that none could compare in prowess with Do'ull MacIain 'ic Sheamuis. The fight was just commencing, it is said, when he joined the ranks of his clansmen, and his "Lainnire Riabhach" wrought terrible havoc among his foes. He was a bard of merit, as well as a warrior of note, and in an "iorram," or boat-song, that is attributed to him, he sings of the victory of Coire na Creiche.

> "Latha dhomh 's a' Chuith-lionn chreagach;
> Chuala mi phiob mhòr 'ga spreigeadh;
> Nuallan a' chruidh laoigh 'ga freagairt;
> Bha beul-sios air luchd an leadain,
> Bha làrach am bròg 'san eabar;
> 'S iad Clann Dho-uill rinn an leagadh," etc.

which literally translated is:—

> "One day I happed in rocky Cuilin,
> I heard the great warpipe astrumming,
> Lowing of milch kine responding,
> Ill-luck befell the men of (long locks?),
> The imprints of their brogues in mire;
> Clan Donald was responsible for their whelming."

Though the subsequent history of this hero belongs to a later period, it may be as well to narrate it here.

He was married to a daughter of MacDonald of Keppoch; and it seems that he was a member of that gallant band that went under the command of another warrior of Skye, equally famous, and a bard of even greater renown, Archd. MacDonald (An Ciaran Mabach), to avenge the murder of the "Children" of Keppoch.

His wife died young, leaving him with two sons, and one daughter, named Mary, who was married to John MacLeod, VI. of Gesto. After he had quitted Eriskay, he went to live with his daughter in Gesto; and while he was there he engaged in the trade of cattle-dealing—an industry that was fated to bring a large measure of prosperity to Skye. It is said that he was the first man from Skye to drive a herd to the markets of Crieff and Falkirk—an achievement then rightly considered a distinct feat, when robber bands on the mainland were so daring as to defy even the government itself.

It was then considered an indignity for a man with pretensions to rank to take part in any occupation other than war, raiding, or hunting; so that Donald's proud son-in-law was never tired of casting aspersions, and slinging innuendoes, at "Aireach liath nam bó" (the grey-haired cattle-keeper), as he disparagingly called him.

It may easily be inferred then that he was far from happy in the house of Gesto, a surmise strengthened by the evidence afforded by another composition of his called "Oran Bràthain," or "Quern Song." As two maidservants were one day grinding corn in an outhouse at Gesto, he noticed that the song did not, as was the custom, accompany the rotation of the quern-stone. He chid them for their neglect of the time-honoured practice, and when they observed they could not remember an appropriate refrain, he lifted his grandchild on his knee, and composed the following song as the maidens in rhythm whirled the quern and ground the corn.

" Hu o hi ri ibh o,
Cia mar tha thu fhir an taighe. Hu o hi," etc.
" Tha mi mar a bha mi roimhe,
Gun mhire, gun cheòl, gun aighear.
'S mi thug na tri seòid do t'athair,
Lùireach 's clogad 's claidheamh.
Thug mi sin dha 's deagh bhean taighe,
Bean a riaraicheadh na maithean.
Mhic nan gormshuilean á Mùideart,
Cha b' e deatach dhubh an dùdain
Chleachd thusa bhi 'n tùrlach t'athar,
Ach fir òga losgadh fùdair,
Ri mire, ri mùirn, 's ri aighear."

Despite the indignities that he had so often heaped upon him, his pompous son-in-law was obliged to beg a favour of his despised relative on one memorable occasion.

A sister of MacLeod of Gesto was married to a MacAskill of Ebost; and, on a daughter being born to the latter, MacLeod went to congratulate him. The brothers-in-law, having imbibed somewhat freely of the liquor provided, quarrelled, and swords were drawn. It is recorded that the point of MacAskill's weapon stuck in a rafter, and MacLeod, throwing chivalry aside, stabbed him so that he was mortally wounded. MacLeod hurried home in grave anxiety, knowing well that the MacAskills would be after him. He asked his wife's advice as to what he should do, and she suggested that he should seek the protection of "Aireach Liath nam Bó"! Though hurt at the insinuation, he concluded that that would be the wisest course under the circumstances; and he repaired to Cuidreach, where his father-in-law then resided.

Early the following morning, a party of the MacAskills was seen approaching MacDonald's house; but when they saw the grey-haired Achilles perambulating in front of his door, and brandishing his great sword the while, they halted; and, as a discretionary measure, it was decided that one of their number should go forward and ask for the surrender of "Gesto." This was done, but the messenger was so terror-struck by the attitude of the grizzly giant he encountered, that he fled ingloriously to his comrades, who, considering it hazardous to join issue with the best fencer of the age, turned about and returned to Ebost.

As we have already seen, it was Do'ull Mac Iain 'ic Sheamuis who was commissioned by his chief to secure the person of the traitorous Uisdean MacGhillespic Chléirich; but, in spite of all he had done for his clan, he had been so neglected that, as has been previously said, he was constrained to live in another man's house. His plight so touched his brother bard, Iain Lom, who visited him on one occasion at Gesto, that the Gaelic Laureate went straight to Duntulm, and, playing on the privilege due to his caste, roundly rated his chief, Sir James Mór, for the disregard that was shown to one who had always been the most eminent protagonist of his clan. Finding that Sir James was somewhat dilatory in making any proposal, the satirist began to compose a scathing lampoon on him; and, after he had inveighed against his chief to a considerable length, the latter demanded him to desist. "I shall," said the bard, "on condition that you do as I advise, and settle a competent portion of land on Do'ull Mac Iain 'ic Sheamuis." The chief now readily concurred; and he implemented his promise by conferring the district of Cuidreach on MacDonald. He died there about 1680. His descendants occupied Kingsborough for many generations, and one of them was the notable lawyer, Sir J. H. A. MacDonald, who, until recently, was Lord Justice Clerk to the Court of Session.

CESSATION OF CLAN WARFARE.

The battle of Coire na Creiche marks the commencement of a new epoch in the history of Skye, for with it ended the age-long feuds between the MacDonalds and the MacLeods, whose relationship to each other during the previous centuries has been waggishly described as "putting rings on each other's fingers, and dirks in each other's hearts."

The authors of "Clan Donald," and Sir Robert Gordon in his "History of Sutherland," declare that the battle of Carinish was fought after, and not before, Coire na Creiche; but the traditions in Skye are consistent in placing the former anterior to the latter. Coire na Creiche was fought in 1601, and the Scottish king, James VI., who was now most anxious to impress the English with his good government, was in a state of consternation lest news of the trouble among the clans of the Western Isles should get abroad and prejudice his claims to the English throne.

He, accordingly, commanded MacLeod to surrender himself to Argyle, and MacDonald to Huntly, and remain with these noblemen until their quarrels should be settled by arbitration. Through the intermediary of MacDonald of Dunnyveg, MacLean of Coll, and other Highland chieftains, a reconciliation was effected, and, in accordance with its terms, those who were made prisoners at Coire na Creiche were set free.

In celebration of the peace, a great festival was held at Dunvegan. Donald Gorm, and the principal cadets of the clan, with all his train, attended; and a magnificent gathering took place. MacLeod's renowned piper, Donald Mór MacCrimmon, struck up the famous piobaireachd, "Fàilte nan Leòdach," as the MacDonalds were approaching the castle; and when he was finished, MacArthur, the piper of MacDonald, reciprocated the friendly greetings by playing that favourite tune, "MacDonald's Salute."

For six days the festivities were continued. There were athletic contests, piping competitions, composition exercises by the bards, and trials of wit between the jesters. Food and drink were provided on that generous scale that has always been a feature of the hospitable halls of Dunvegan, where, as Màiri ni'n Alasdair Ruaidh says:

"Bu tric aoidh chàirdean,
Gu d' Dhùn àghmhor,
Suilbhir, fàilteach,
Cuilm-mhor, stàiteil,
Gun bhuirb, gun àrdan,
Gun diultadh air màl dhéirceach."

From a reference made to this memorable occasion by one of the bards of MacDonald, namely, Neil MacVurich, we gather that there was no stinting then of "the generous wine which would overcome the hardiest heroes," for he confesses:

"Fiche misge lin g' laoi;
No char leigse lin no le,"

which means:

"Twenty times drunk we were each day,
Nor did we rebel against it any more than he."

An incident that is said to have happened during one of these carousals is worthy of mention. MacVurich, the bard of MacDonald, overcome with wine, was stretched full-length in a lobby, surrounded by a pack of licking hounds. MacLeod's bard, noticing the comical posture of his rival, observed:

"Tha bàrd Mhic Dho'uill air a dhruim,
'S e cur as a chionn a chòrr
'S am fear thug dhàsan a dhiol,
Thug e biadh do choin 'ic Leòid";

to which, with lively wit, the prostrate bard retorted:

"An sgeula dh' aithriseadh air MacLeòid,
'S ann bu chòir a bhi 'ga chleith;
Nach faigheadh a chuid chon ri òl,
Ach na dheanadh a luchd òil a sgeith."

As an interlude in the proceedings, the fools of the respective chiefs were one day pitted against one another, in order to discover which was the wiser. They were led to the shore, for the tide had ebbed, and were told to busy themselves in collecting shellfish. A gold piece had previously been placed in a conspicuous position on a boulder that lay in the course the "amadain" were enjoined to take, while the chiefs hid themselves behind a rock hard by, closely watching their behaviour. MacDonald's fool, who was the first to observe the coin, shouted aloud: "Oh, see the gold." "Never mind it," said the other, with well-feigned nonchalance, " 'nuair bhios sinn ri òrach, bitheamaid ri òrach; 's 'nuair bhios sinn ri maorach, bitheamaid ri maorach"; and they left the gold and resumed their work. Soon, however, it was noticed that MacDonald's simpleton had been sent on a quest farther along the shore, while he who had so lately given him such a magnificent homily on the virtue of concentration on the "duty that lies nearest," slunk hastily back, and pocketed the precious metal.

We "ask not proud philosophy to teach" us which of the fools showed the higher wisdom.

Later, in that same year, an order was issued by the king and his Council, requesting Rory Mor to attend at Falkland Castle, or at any other venue that the king might afterwards decide on, by the 10th day of August; and should he fail to obey the summons, he was to be held guilty of treason, and his estates were to be forfeited. Rory Mor refused to comply, as is evidenced by a fresh command, dated 11th August, 1601, in which he is denounced as a rebel.

So far as is known, no such summons was served on Donald Gorm Mor; but, shortly before the first royal command was despatched to Rory Mor, an injunction was given to each of the chiefs of Skye to give assurances that they would in future refrain from invading each other's lands, and to find sureties for their behaviour.

But Rory Mor continued on his career of defiance, so that in the year 1605 the government issued an edict, ordering him to quit Dunvegan, and all the other forts he occupied, within twenty-four hours, and surrender them to his majesty's representatives, who were to be despatched to deliver the charge. But on this occasion, again, no attempt was made to carry out the threat of eviction, and the net result of all these warnings was to make the chief more insubordinate than ever. Thus we find that, in 1607, he set out on an expedition to harass the "Gentlemen Venturers" at Stornoway. He stormed the castle of that town, took possession of it, and refused to surrender. Again there is issued a command, wherein he is ordered to deliver the castle over to the king's bailiffs within six hours, "under penalty of treason." In the same year the Privy Council commissioned Argyle to seize Rory Mor and present him at court to answer for his conduct; and, whether Argyle was successful or not, we find that a bond of friendship was drawn up in 1609 between the Skye chiefs, who pledge themselves "to forget, forgive, and abstain from quarrelling in future, being certainly persuaded of their dread sovereign's clemency, and to live hereafter in Christian society and peace." It is interesting to notice that the witnesses to this contract are Lachlan MacKinnon of Strath ("Lachlan mise Mac Fingon") and "Allan O'Colgan, minister of Duirinish."

The change of attitude presented by the chiefs is attributed to an event, of far-reaching consequence, that happened in the previous year. In 1608, the king sent Lord Ochiltree, accompanied by a large armed force, on a mission to the Western Isles to ascertain, and report on, the conduct of the recalcitrant chiefs; and, if possible, to tame "the wicked blood of the Isles." A ship, called the "Moon," was placed at the disposal of the commissioners, of whom Andrew Knox, Bishop of the Isles, was president. At the same time a royal command was issued, warning certain chiefs to present themselves, with their principal followers, at the Castle of Aros, in Mull.

All the chiefs, who had been notified, seem to have obeyed the summons; and the following regulations were read to them, and they were asked to promise, in writing, that they would obey them:—

(1) They were to find security for the payment of His Majesty's rents.

(2) The chiefs and vassals were strictly to observe the laws of the realm.

(3) They were to surrender to the king all garrisoned houses.

(4) They were to renounce the heritable jurisdiction, and submit to sheriffs or other officers appointed by the Crown.

(5) All galleys were to be burned, except such as were to be used for essential services—*e.g.*, the conveyance to the mainland, or from island to island, of the rents (then, of course, paid in kind).

(6) Children to be sent to school.

(7) The use of two-handed swords, guns, and bows and arrows to be prohibited.

Most of the chiefs demurred to subscribe their names to these conditions; and then was enacted a plot as discreditable to the government authorities as several others that were practised on the Highlanders. On Sunday morning an invitation was extended by Lord Ochiltree to the chiefs, asking them to go on board the "Moon" for the alleged purpose of attending divine service, to be conducted by Bishop Knox; and, after that, to discuss affairs at dinner. All the chiefs obeyed, save Rory Mor, who suspected a conspiracy, and they were immediately told they were the prisoners of the king. The ship sailed south to Ayr; and while others were imprisoned in Stirling, Donald Gorm Mor was placed in Blackness Castle. Here he was detained for a time, and was liberated on his promising to respect the following conditions:—

(1) He was to find security for his appearance yearly at Stirling at a fixed date;
(2) He was to declare his adhesion to Protestantism;
(3) He was to maintain order in his dominions; and
(4) He was to give his help in surveying the Isles (a work which he undertook, and was completed in 1609).

In that year Bishop Knox was authorised by the government to summon the chiefs, this time to Iona; and it is significant that he earnestly requests to be relieved of the duty, as his "credit has gone of late," referring no doubt to the part he played the previous year in kidnapping the men of the Isles. Most of the chiefs obeyed the command; and among the names of those who attended we find that of Rory Mor, Donald Gorm Mor, and Lachlan MacKinnon of Strath.

The famous Bond and Statutes of Icolmkill were drawn up, and the chiefs subscribed to them without a single dissentient. Rory Mor's name was appended to the "Bond"; and it is noteworthy that, from that time until his death, his loyalty suffered no lapse. Until then he had, of course, been in disgrace with the government; and a new grant of his lands, which is still in the charter chest at Dunvegan, had been made to Lord Balmerino, Sir Patrick Spens, and Sir George Hay; and the districts that were alienated are mentioned as Harris, Dunvegan, and Duntulm, the last of which had uninterruptedly been in the possession of the MacDonalds since 1538. But, as had happened so often before, the gift was not taken over by the southroners.

From the time he had agreed to the "Statutes of Iona," Rory Mor was steadily growing in royal favour. In May, 1610, he received a pardon for all his crimes; and, in the following month, in compliance with the promise made in Iona, he presented himself at Holyrood. With him then were Donald Gorm Mor of Sleat and Lachlan MacKinnon of Strath; and the island chiefs pledged themselves to help to restore order, to maintain justice, to refrain from attacking each other, and to submit all differences to arbitration.

Henceforth Rory Mor concerned himself chiefly with the consolidation of his estates. In 1610 he acquired from Lord

Kintail, who had in the previous year purchased from the "Gentlemen Venturers" the rights of the forfeited lands of Lewis and Skye, the district of Waternish, in exchange for the portion of Trotarnish, namely, the two unciates at Uig, which he claimed as his own; and in August of the following year he received a royal charter for his lands, which, as we have already seen, had been forfeited ten years previously. In the grant there is included the estate of Waternish.

In November, 1611, a royal order is made in favour of Andrew, Bishop of the Isles, probably for his services in connection with the settlement effected in the Hebrides, of "all, and whatsoever sums of money shall be resting owing to his Majesty by Roderick MacLeod of Dunvegan"; and whether the bishop benefited by such a grant or not, cannot now be said; but we find a significant minute in the records of the Privy Council for the year 1613, to the effect that Rory Mor and Donald Gorm Mor had each reached a settlement with the Exchequer in regard to their arrears of rent, and that these chiefs were continuing to obey the laws.

It is obvious that Rory was now rapidly becoming a royal favourite, and the culmination of his preferment was attained in 1613, when he visited London, and was fêted by the king, who honoured him with the order of knighthood. This was James' wise method of "taming the wild blood of the Isles," for, "being allured by our good usage, he may in time coming be so much the more allured to manifest his good-will to our service"; and His Majesty guessed aright.

The indulgent treatment accorded to Sir Rory Mor no doubt induced his brother chief, Donald Gorm Mor, to endeavour to find out how he stood in the good graces of his sovereign. He, therefore, craved confirmation of the charter granted him in 1594, and his plea was readily assented to. This was in 1614.

In the following year Sir Rory Mor wrote a letter of protest to the Privy Council against the granting to MacDonald of a charter for Sleat, Uist, and Trotarnish, from which the Clan Donald had, he declares, "most violently detruded my forbears." He adverts to the changed conditions in the Highlands, when appeal is no longer made to war, but to arbitration, for the settlement of disputes; and he craves that justice be done to him.

He was granted his wish in 1616, when a court of arbitration was held, and judgment was given to the effect that the lands over which the MacLeods claimed a *de jure* right were to be assigned to the MacDonalds. The latter were, however, ordered to pay a sum of money to MacLeod by way of compensation; and, for that purpose, Sir Rory Mor was to draw the rent for Sleat for a period of years. That this contract was carried out is shown by the fact that during the years 1618, 1619, and 1622, the taxes for Sleat were paid by Sir Rory Mor.

It was on his return journey from Edinburgh, after his successful interview with the Privy Council, that Donald Gorm Mor was persuaded by the Bishop of the Isles to join the expedition that was set on foot to proceed against Sir James MacDonald of Islay, who was then in revolt. The Skye chief had only a small retinue with him at the time, but he joined the Bishop, though the mission proved wholly ineffectual to induce the men of Islay to surrender Dunnyveg.

According to the Statutes of Iona, which decreed the chiefs were to present themselves once a year before the Privy Council in Edinburgh, Sir Rory Mor and MacKinnon of Strath appeared there in July, 1616; but, owing to illness, Donald Gorm was unable to attend. The rebellion of Sir James MacDonald of Islay, in which many of the vassals of Donald Gorm took part, still convulsed the Western Isles; and the Privy Council felt it to be incumbent on them to enforce the "Statutes" with greater stringency than they had hitherto done. It was with that aim that they added new clauses to the "Statutes," ratified the old ones, and presented "The Regulations for Chiefs" to those whom they concerned. All the chiefs agreed to be bound by these "Regulations," and they duly observed them until 1622.

The necessity for passing these "Regulations" afford such an interesting insight into conditions that prevailed in our island at that time that some of them will be quoted:—

(1) At their annual appearance before the Privy Council, MacDonald and MacLeod were each to present three of their principal cadets, while MacKinnon was enjoined to exhibit one. (The last chief gave the names of five members of his clan for whose conduct he declined to be answerable.)

(2) In their households, Donald Gorm Mor and Sir Rory Mor were not to maintain more than six gentlemen each, and MacKinnon three.

(3) MacDonald was to reside at Duntulm, MacLeod at Dunvegan, and MacKinnon at Kilmaree. They were to add to the amenities of their policies by planting trees, and they were to cultivate home farms, so that they might thereby "be exercised, and eschew idleness."

(4) No chief was to maintain more than one birlinn.

(5) They were to send all their children above the age of nine to the Lowlands to be instructed in English, a knowledge of which was to be held an essential condition for any who might claim the succession to an estate. Under this head there occurs a lengthy statement, in which it is averred that the principal reason "for the barbarity, impiety, and incivility within the Isles has proceeded from the neglect of the education of the children, who see nothing in their tender years but the barbarous and ancient forms of the country. They are, thereby, made to apprehend that there is no other form of duty or civility kept in any other part of the country; . . . whereas, if they had been trained in virtue, and the English tongue, they would have been the better prepared to reduce their country to godliness, obedience, and civility."

(6) Finally, a regulation was imposed on the chiefs with a view to restricting the consumption of wine: "The great and extraordinary excess of drinking commonly used among the commons and tenants of the Isles is not only one occasion of the beastly and barbarous cruelties and inhumanities that fall out among them, . . . but it draws numbers of them to miserable necessity and poverty." While MacKinnon's allowance was fixed at one tun per annum, MacDonald and MacLeod were each permitted a ration of four tuns of wine.

That the last regulation was most necessary is shown by the carousals that took place during the celebration of the peace that ended the war called "Cogadh na Cailich Chaim"; but that the regulation was more "honoured in the breach than the observance" is amply proved by the accounts we have of the inordinate drinking of wine at Dunvegan in spite of the enactment that sought to restrict such excesses. Canon R. C. MacLeod of MacLeod refers to letters of horning in the charter-chest at Dunvegan, issued against Sir Rory Mor; and in one of these, for the year 1625, just before his death, the amount of debt charged against him for wine, alone, was £500!

In the year 1616, when the epoch-making "Statutes of Iona" were formulated, there died the chief of Sleat, Donald Gorm Mor. He had been in failing health for some time previously, and, as we have already seen, he had been prevented by illness from attending the conference of chiefs with the Bishop of the Isles in Iona. He was thrice married—(1) To Margaret of Dunvegan, the famous "Caileach Cham," whom he divorced; (2) to Mary, the sister of MacKenzie of Kintail; and (3) to Marjory, a sister of Macintosh of Dunachton. He died childless, and was succeeded by the oldest son of his brother, Archibald the Clerk, and the heir is therefore known to history as "Do'ull Gorm Og, MacGhillespic Chléirich."

The young chief of the MacDonalds became early apprehensive of the power of Sir Rory Mor, who, as we have already seen, was to hold Sleat, the best part of his patrimony, until the instalments of compensation agreed on early in 1616 had been duly paid. In the summer of 1616 young Donald Gorm went to Edinburgh, primarily with the object of seeking protection from the king against the chief of Dunvegan. He was graciously received, and made such a favourable impression on his sovereign that he was invested with the insignia of knighthood; and he was confirmed in his title to all his estates with the exception of Trotarnish. A promise was given him, however, that, as soon as all the arrears of compensation had been duly paid to Sir Rory Mor, this territory also would revert inalienably to his clan.

About this time there was much disquiet in the Western Isles, caused by piratical bands composed chiefly of men belonging to Clan Ian of Ardnamurchan. It seems that this clan had been goaded into rebellion through the stratagem of Argyle, who sought to extend his sway over their territory. In that he succeeded, and on their detrusion the MacIans launched upon a life of wholesale plundering. They carried on their nefarious work for several years, until their confederacy was broken up in 1625. In the summer of that year they had been extraordinarily bold. They had been harassing ships off the coast of Skye, and Sir Rory Mor determined to put an end to their depredations. He collected his clansmen, and, having encountered the pirates, he defeated them in a short and sharp struggle. He closely pursued them to their fastnesses in Ardnamurchan, where, in conjunction with Lord Lorne, he succeeded in rounding them up. Their leaders were either killed or banished, and from that time the Clan Ian of Ardnamurchan ceased to exist as a separate entity.

In the year 1623 the freedom of the City of Edinburgh was conferred on Sir Rory Mor, a significant honour, indicating the change in his conduct, and a recognition of the important services that this erstwhile rebel was now rendering to his country.

Sir Rory Mor was married to Isabella of Glengarry, whose effigy in stone may still be seen in the Castle of Dunvegan. By her he had a large family of sons and daughters. These were John, his successor, Sir Roderick of Talisker, Sir Norman of Bernera, William of Hamera, and Donald of Greshornish; Janet, who married Iain Garbh MacGillechalum of Raasay; Florence, who was the wife of Donald MacSween of Roag, and three others.

In the year 1626 the chief had occasion to pay a visit to Fortrose; and while there he became suddenly ill, and died; and he was buried in the cathedral of that town.

He was a man possessed of great vigour of body and of mind, of quick decision and clear discernment, and as able a diplomat as his renowned grandfather, Alasdair Crotach. Like the latter, he succeeded in raising his clan to a position of high honour; and it was for that reason that he earned the cognomen "Mór," or "Great," that succeeding generations have rightly conferred upon him.

He was highly revered in life, and in death he was sincerely mourned by every member of his clan. His famous piper, Pàdruig Mór MacCrimmon, could no longer bear to play the pipes that had so often delighted his large-hearted patron; and he left Dunvegan's hospitable halls and went to live on his farm in Borreraig. It was then he composed the melting melody of "Tog Orm Mo Phìob":

"Tog orm mo phìob is théid mi dhachaidh;
Mo thruaighe mì, mo léir mar thachair.
Tog orm mo phìob 's mi air mo chràdh
Mu Ruairidh Mòr mu Ruairidh Mòr.
Tog orm mo phìob, tha mi sgìth,
'S mur faigh mi i, theid mi dhachaidh:
Clàrsach no pìob cha tog mo chıldh,
Cha bheò fear mo ghràidh Ruairidh Mòr."

In "Luinneag Mhic Leòid," which she composed to Sir Norman of Bernera, Mairi Ni'n Alasdair Ruaidh, the far-famed bardess of Skye, thus sang the praises of Sir Rory Mor:

"(A mhic an) fhir chliùitich
Bha gu fiùghantach, ainmeil;
Thug barrachd an gliocas
Air gach ridir' bha'n Albainn,
Ann an cogadh, 's an sìochainnt,
'S ann an dìoladh air airgiod."

IAIN, FOURTEENTH CHIEF OF DUNVEGAN.

Sir Rory Mor was succeeded by his oldest son, John, a man who, from his enormous physique, was called Iain Mór, or Big John. He is mentioned as a student of the University of Glasgow in 1624, and reference is made a few years afterwards to a grant of 100 marks he made towards "the building of the college and the library." The policy of peace and retrenchment, so well advanced by his father in his later years, was continued by him. The direct result of this was the amassing of vast wealth; but great encroachments were fated to be made on his hoard by his indigent relatives, especially by his numerous brothers-in-law, for whom he had often to stand surety, and to lose his guarantee.

In addition, he was mulcted to the extent of 20,000 marks by Argyle, who, in 1606, had promised Rory Mor he would intercede for him with the king for a charter for Glenelg on condition that the Chief of Dunvegan would acknowledge him as his overlord for that portion of his lands. In 1633 John was induced to do homage to Argyle, and to pay him the fine above mentioned as well. Thus it was that the MacLeods held Glenelg as the vassals of Argyle until 1811, when that estate was sold out of the family.

It was probably the relationship he bore to the Duke of Argyle that prevented the Chief of MacLeod from throwing in his lot with Montrose during the Great Civil War, just as it was the inherent hatred of that House that sent many another Highland chief to the side of the Stuarts. As we shall see later, his neighbour, Sir James Mor of Sleat, though not himself very active in the Stuart cause, sent a contingent of some 400 men, under his brother, Donald of Castleton, to join the ranks of Montrose; but John of Dunvegan gave his support neither to the King nor to the Covenanters. It is on record that, as Charles was on the way north, in 1639, on that futile expedition of his to force Episcopacy on Scotland, he addressed a letter to the Chief of MacLeod, soliciting his support; but the latter made no response to the royal appeal. Nor did he take part in the marvellous campaigns of Montrose. He seems, indeed, to have had no inclination for war, for his mind was set on far higher things. He was a pious man, endued with pure and altruistic purposes, and intensely eager to improve the morals of his age.

In addition to his lofty aims, he was also famous for his princely generosity; and, in spite of all the calls made upon him for financial aid, he had much to spare, if all accounts be true. According to Canon MacLeod of MacLeod, when his treasure-chest was opened after his death, it was found to contain many a bulging leather bag and well-filled stocking, a "yellow woollen sark" covering a hoard, and several catskin purses that the careful chief had used as repositories for his cash.

He was married to Sibella, daughter of MacKenzie, first Lord of Kintail, and he had a family of three sons and five daughters. Of the former, two, namely, Rory (the Witty) and John (Iain Breac), were chiefs, while one of his daughters, Sibella, was married to Thomas Fraser of Beaufort. That nobleman died at Dunvegan in 1699, and he was buried there at his own request: "For the great love he bore the family of MacLeod, he desired to be buried near his wife's relations, in the place where two of his uncles lay." Such is an extract from the inscription on an obelisk of freestone erected to his memory in the churchyard of Kilmuir by the notorious Simon Fraser, who was beheaded on Towerhill in 1747.

John's oldest daughter, Mary, was married to Sir James Mor, the Chief of Sleat; and it was probably to her that Roderick Morrison, the harper and bard of Dunvegan, referred when, in his lament for Iain Breac, "Creach nan Ciadan," he says:

"Gheibh gach neach de na dh' fhàg thu,
Rud an àite na bh' aca,
Ach mis' agus Màiri
Chuir a bràthair an tasgadh."

There is extant another lament which is a worthy tribute to this generous chief. It is called "Iorram na Truaighe," and is the composition of a cadet of the clan, one known as Pol Crùbach, the son of a MacLeod of Lyndale. Apart from its historical interest, it deserves to be quoted because of its high poetic merit and its genuine ring:

"Ach a' ghnùis na féile,
Nach do bhreugnaich riamh t'fhacal aon uair,
Ceann-uidhe nan deòraidh,
Nan aircleach gun treòir is nan truagh.
A chearraich na tice,
Aig am bu tric bhiodh àireamh sluaigh;
An fhéile dhùbailt
Nach iarradh an cùnntas cruaidh."

SIR DONALD MACDONALD, FIRST BARONET.

Speaking of the chiefs who lived in his own time, MacVurich, in the "Black Book of Clan Ranald," mentions, among others, "John, son of Rory Mor MacLeod of Harris; Lachlan, son of John Balbh MacKinnon; John Garbh MacGillechallum of Raasay; and Sir Donald Gorm, son of Gillespic MacDonald, Lord of Sleat and Trotternish"—and the last he characterises as "a great courtier with King Charles." Iain Lom, the Gaelic poet-laureate of Charles II., also mentions the estimation in which Sir Donald was held by royalty:

"Do'ull Gorm bu ghlan gnùis,
Fear bu mhìn bha dheth 'n triùir,
Cha bu chorr-cheann thu 'n cùirt,
Righ Tearlach."

Sir Donald had been knighted, as we have seen, by James I. in 1617; and such was the favour with which the king regarded him, that he was raised to the rank of baronet in the year 1625, being designated "of Nova Scotia." As he was an ardent supporter of the Stuart line, and the bitter foe of Argyle, who led the Covenanters, he early showed his bias in the struggle of King Charles. Such was the trust reposed in him that, in 1639, he was made the king's Lieutenant in the Isles, with authority to suppress all those who might be disloyal to the crown. About this time he paid a visit to London, and he made a highly favourable impression on the king.

In consequence of his loyalty to the Stuart cause, he was summoned before the Scottish Parliament in 1641, and was accused of treason to his country. After suffering imprisonment for a short space, he was at length set at liberty; but he did not long enjoy his freedom, for he died in 1643.

He was one of the ablest men of his age; and he well merited the eulogium passed on him by Màiri ni'n Alasdair Ruaidh:

"Sir Do'ull á Sléibht,
Ceannard nan ceud,
Ceannsgalach, treun, rò ghlic."

At the time of his death, big things were expected to happen in the Highlands. From the commencement of the Civil War, King Charles had been in communication with the Earl of Antrim, who was himself a MacDonald, on the advisability of raising a large force of Irish, that was to act in conjunction with the Highlanders on the west coast of Scotland. After much deliberation, that project was agreed to; and an army of at least 10,000 Irishmen was to be transported to the district of Morvern. There the command was to be assumed by Sir Donald of Sleat, who was to raise his own men and as many of the other Highland clans as he could influence to join.

There was much enthusiasm in Skye about the coming of this force, but, after many months of weary waiting, the expected army had not arrived, so that the war-ardour of the Skyemen began to wane.

At length, in 1644, the Irish contingent set sail. But instead of 10,000, it consisted of only 1500, men—a ruffianly band that, according to Patrick Gordon, himself a strong supporter of the Stuarts, was so degraded that, "to them, there was no distinction between a man and a beast." This auxiliary force was under the command of Alexander MacDonald, better known as "Alasdair MacCholla Chiotaich"—a man of herculean proportions, and of paramount courage, whose exploits made a deep impression on the imagination of his age. The contemporary bards, Iain Lom and Dorothy Brown, the poetess of Luing, sing his praises; the latter composed a meritorious panegyric on him:

" Bhuailte creach, is speach mhòr leat,
'S cha bhiodh chridhe tighinn 'ad' fheòraich,
Aig a' liuthad iarla 's mórair,
Thigeadh a thoirt mach do chòireach.
Thig MacShimsidh, thig MacLeòid ann,
Thig MacDho'uill Dhuibh a Lòchaidh,
Bi Sir Sheumas ann le mhòr fhir,
Bi na b'annsa, Aonghas Og ann,
'S t'fhuil ghreadhnach fhein bhi 'ga dòrtadh,
'S deas tarruinn nan geur-lann gleòiste."

The most reliable account we have of this expedition is to be found in the "Black Book of Clan Ranald," where it is stated that the Irishmen landed in Morvern, and, after they had seized the castles of Kinlochaline and of Mingarry, they made for Bernera of Kyle Rhea by the very difficult terrain that intervenes. Their ships sailed to "Loch Eishort in the Strath, to Sir Donald MacDonald; for the King's and the Marquis of Antrim's orders were for him to take the command of the army, and to take every man who would rise with him; but Sir Donald died half a year before that. Alasdair then offered the command to Sir James, the son of Sir Donald, but he refused it, for he thought the army too small, since the whole kingdom was against him, he having only 1500 men, so that Alasdair came to the resolution of returning to Ireland."

He was just weighing anchor in Loch Eishort, preparatory to quitting Scotland, when his small fleet was beset by three ships of war, sent by the "Covenanting Parliament" to watch affairs in Skye. A short, sharp struggle ensued, but the superior equipment of the Covenanting frigates soon gave them the advantage, so that the Irish force had no option but to ground their ships at the head of Loch Eishort in order to avoid capture. Thus, as MacVurich naïvely puts it, "MacDonald was obliged to remain in the kingdom into which he had come, whether he liked it or not."

Concluding that it would be dangerous to remain any longer in Skye, MacDonald made for Kylerhea by Bealach Udal, and, having crossed the narrows to the mainland, he succeeded at length in joining Glengarry. Thereafter his career is well known. His unique military skill won for him the rank of Major-General under Montrose, and his important services were recognised by the king, who raised him to the order of knighthood. Of him, Iain Lom enthusiastically sings:

"Cha b'e sud an siubhal cearbach
A thug Alasdair do dh' Albainn;
Creachadh, losgadh, agus marbhadh;
'S leagadh leis coileach Strathbhalgaidh."

Although Sir James MacDonald of Sleat declined to accept the command of the Irish troops, many of his clansmen fought under Montrose. They were present at Inverlochy, and also at Auldearn, where such a notable victory was won as a result of the brilliant leadership of Montrose, and the bravery of MacColla Ciotaich; not to mention the treachery of the Covenanting leaders. The contingent from Skye, numbering about 400 men, and commanded by the chief's brother, Donald of Castleton, and Alexander MacDonald of Skerinish, remained with Montrose until the close of his brilliant career at Philiphaugh, in the year 1649.

CHAPTER VIII.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS, 1600-1650.

LAW AND ORDER.

THE seventeenth century was ushered in to the accompaniment of great changes in the Isle of Skye; and of these, the most noteworthy was the cessation of clan warfare. A new outlook supervenes, and, instead of having recourse to arms to settle their disagreements, the chiefs now submit their differences to courts of arbitration. The will to plunder and destroy had, to a large extent, subsided; and it must be admitted that much of that reformation in conduct was due to the exertions of King James I. It is a strange fact that that monarch was never so solicitous about the behaviour of the men of the Isles as when he crossed the Scottish border into England. Hitherto, his laxity in enforcing his commands had emboldened the more recalcitrant chiefs to disregard the royal authority, so that feuds and rebellions were frequent; henceforth the establishment of order in the "peccant region" of the Isles was, without a doubt, the object nearest his heart; and he set about its attainment in no uncertain manner.

The necessity of possessing charters for their lands had been driven home on the chiefs, and they had at length been persuaded that they could no longer afford to hold themselves aloof from, or act in independence of, the central authority of the state. Their change of attitude is seen in their eagerness to cut a figure in courts—Sir Rory Mor of Dunvegan and Sir Donald MacDonald of Sleat go all the way to Edinburgh, and even to London, to visit their king, and place their pleas before him. It is of interest to record that the former was given a licence by the king to travel out of Scotland, and proceed to the English court whenever he chose, "and none was to challenge him or pursue him."

The new viewpoint was induced principally through the "Statutes of Iona" that had been approved of in 1608, and emended and confirmed in 1616, under the title of "Regulations for Chiefs." Many years were to elapse, however, before people had become accustomed to the new conditions; and the "Regulations" were often broken. This was to be expected, for, owing to the state of lawlessness that had previously existed in Skye, as elsewhere in the Highlands, malcontents and criminals from all parts of Scotland made for the Western Isles; and when they failed to attach themselves to a chief, they formed piratical bands that were the scourge and the terror of the west. Vagabonds also, taking advantage of the spirit of hospitality that prevailed, flocked to the Isles, and proved to be a heavy drain on the resources of the people. By the Statutes of Iona, such "sorners" were ordered to be placed in the stocks, and, after that punishment, to be expelled the country.

These ruffianly idlers were, no doubt, responsible for much of the molestation to which fishermen, who resorted to the coasts of Skye, were subjected; but it must be added that the natives themselves were not wholly free from blame for many an outrage. Thus, in 1635, complaints were made by "those of His Majesty's subjects who were engaged in fishing" that the natives stole their fish, gear, victual, and "furniture"; and letters of inhibition were issued against Sir Donald MacDonald, John MacLeod of Dunvegan, and others, warning these chiefs that it was incumbent on them to supply warrants to any that entered the lochs where fish was being pursued, unless they were prepared to hold themselves responsible for the conduct of such persons.

A letter was written in 1631 by Charles I. to the Privy Council in Scotland, enquiring about the state of government in the Hebrides; and the answer by John, Bishop of the Isles, is a document of great significance. The Bishop complains that there is no respect for the law among the inhabitants, and that therefore it is impossible to make any headway, either in religious or civil administration among them. He also adverts to the manner in which they flout the recent "Regulations," and he points out that, despite numerous infringements, "no punishment is ever inflicted on them."

Of the "Statutes," that one which suffered most was the fifth. It aimed at the curtailment of the consumption of strong drink; and we find that, in 1622, the Privy Council inserted a new regulation in that code, prohibiting masters of ships from selling wines to the peoples of the Western Isles in excess of the allowance fixed by law. "For the insatiable desire whereof the said Islanders are so far possessed that, when there arrives any ship there with wines, they spend both days and nights in their excess of drinking, so long as there is any of the wine left; so that, being overcome with drink, there falls out many inconveniences among them, to the break of His Majesty's peace."

THE CHURCH.

We have already seen that the Protestant faith was professed in Skye as early as 1573; but, as a result of the transitionary phase that succeeded the Reformation, the Church and its affairs were much neglected. For many a year the fire of the new faith burned but low in Skye, as in the rest of the Highlands; for none had arisen there with the enthusiasm of Hamilton, of Knox, and the other Reformers, to fan it into a flame. No martyrs had been called upon to seal their beliefs with their blood; and nothing, indeed, had been done to arouse the imagination of the people, who had been actuated in their conversion more by policy than by principle. They had discarded the old faith, but they failed to be influenced by the new. The churches were allowed to fall into a state of disrepair, stipends were not regularly paid to the incumbents—were, indeed, sometimes withheld altogether—and there supervened a callous indifference to sacred things, so that we need not wonder at the prayer of Bishop Knox to the king to establish order among "folk devoid of the true knowledge of God."

In this connection, the preface to the "Statutes of Iona" furnishes a significant commentary on the position of the Church in the Isles at the beginning of the seventeenth century. It proceeds to state that "the great ignorance to which the chiefs, for the most part, themselves, but also the whole commonalty, have been, and are, subject to, which is the cause of the neglect of all duty to God, to the great growth of all kinds of vice, proceeds partly from the lack of pastors and partly from the contempt for those already planted there. Now they agree that the pastors to be planted there are to be reverently obeyed, their stipends dutifully paid, the ruinous kirks, with reasonable diligence, to be repaired, the Sabbaths solemnly kept, adulteries and such vile slanders to be severely punished." That was in 1608.

In the following year a bond was signed by Donald Gorm Mor, Rory Mor, and Lachlan MacKinnon, among others, wherein they declare that they are to "profess the true religion publicly taught within the realm of Scotland, and embraced by His Majesty and his estates, as the only and undoubted truth of God."

Although the religion then "publicly taught within the realm of Scotland" was Presbyterianism, most, if not all, of the ministers of Skye belonged to the Episcopalian Church. One of the most notable of the clergy of that time was Rev. Neil MacKinnon, who, in 1627, had been presented to the parish of Strath. He was a nephew of Sir Lachlan MacKinnon, chief of his clan, and he was a graduate in Arts of the university of Glasgow, having been laureated there in the year 1625. He is said to have been the first minister in the island to dispense the sacrament according to the rites of the Protestant faith. His principal church was at Kilchrist in Strath, the successor of Ashig, which was then in a ruinous condition. It is said that he was always dressed in the kilt, wearing that garb even when he was officiating in the pulpit, and carrying a sword. It appears that one Kenneth MacKenzie ministered in the district of Sleat and the small isles, to which charge he had been presented by Andrew, Bishop of the Isles, in the year 1609. These two clergymen of Skye declared, in the year 1627, that they would surrender all the Papists in the Isles to the Clerk of Council. When, about the year 1641, the church of Sleat became vacant, the Rev. Neil MacKinnon was presented to it, and he laboured there until 1661. In that year the parishes of Strath and Sleat were conjoined, and they continued as one charge until the year 1726, when Skye was divided into the seven parochial districts that have persisted to the present day. Mr MacKinnon was succeeded by Rev. Farquhar MacLennan, who had been translated thither from the district of Loch Broom, and he ministered in Strath until 1675.

In the year 1642 a notable event happened in the extensive parish of Snizort that then comprised the present parish of Portree. This was the induction of the Rev. Archibald MacQueen, the first of a succession of ministers, son succeeding father without a break to the fourth generation, over a period of 145 years.

In the year 1609, one, "Allan O'Colgan," who is described as "minister of Diurinish," was a witness to a contract of friendship entered into by Donald Gorm Mor and Rory Mor of Dunvegan. The Rev. Hew MacQueen, a graduate of Glasgow in 1597, was admitted minister to this district in 1626, and he was still there in 1643. He had, as assistant, a "reidar" named "John MacCorkill," who officiated in the districts of Minginish and Bracadale also.

In the year 1632 the Rev. John MacKinnon was ordained minister in Bracadale and Minginish by John, Bishop of the Isles. He officiated in the chapel of St. "Assind" in the former, and in the latter, in the "Kirk of Eynort in Menynes, dedicated to St. Malrube, called Kilmulruy."

In the report concerning the state of his diocese in 1626, by Thomas Knox, Bishop of the Isles, the amounts contributed by the chiefs of Skye towards the support of the church are given. The levy on Sir Donald MacDonald was 500 marks per annum; Sir Lachlan MacKinnon paid £50; while from the Chief of Dunvegan nothing had been received towards the funds of the church.

The Presbytery of Skye is mentioned for the first time in August, 1642, when it was joined by the Assembly to the Synod of Argyle.

Education and Culture.

As has already been said, we are dependent for almost all the facts we possess concerning the conditions of life in the Isles on the writings of Lowlanders. As these people did not understand the Gaelic language, and were out of sympathy with the manner of life then prevailing in the north, it is evident that we cannot derive much authentic information from their records to enable us to form an estimate of the true state of affairs. As is well known, George Buchanan described the Highlanders as "Fures et latrones" (thieves and robbers); while James I., in his "Basilikon Doron," counsels his son, afterwards Charles I., to consider the Highlanders as "mere wolves and bears." Again, in 1608, Bishop Knox, who was the president of Lord Ochiltree's Council, reports to the King that "the Islesmen are void of the true knowledge of God, and are ignorant of your Majesty's laws." In the "Regulations for Chiefs" occurs the statement: "The principal cause of barbarity, impiety, and incivility in the Isles has proceeded from the small care the chiefs and principal clansmen have had in the education and the upbringing of their children in virtue and learning. Careless of other duties, they keep their children still at home with them, where they see nothing in their tender years but the barbarous and ancient forms of the country; so that, when they come to years of maturity, they cannot be reclaimed, for incivility has been bred and settled in them, whereas, if they had been sent to the inland in their youth, and trained in virtue and learning, and the English tongue, they would be the better prepared to reform their countries, and reduce the same to godliness and civility."

It is manifest that these observations are a travesty on the manner of life that obtained in the Highlands at that time; for the Lowlander, who was out of sympathy with the life of the people, and was ignorant of their language, concluded that the inhabitants of the north and west were wholly devoid of culture merely because they spoke a tongue other than English. Those in authority, therefore, were endued with the settled conviction that the cause of all the trouble in the Isles could be traced to the Gaelic speech, and, accordingly, everything possible was done to uproot the offending tongue. In the "Regulations for Chiefs" of 1616, it was enacted that "the vulgar Irish (Gaelic) language, which is one of the chief causes of the continuance of barbarity and incivility amongst the inhabitants of the isles, be abolished and removed."

But proscribed tongues, like persecuted peoples, often thrive under duress; and that such was the case with Gaelic at this time we shall see when we come to deal with the poetry of the second portion of this century in Skye. Then a brilliant galaxy of bards arises, among whom may be mentioned Archibald MacDonald ("An Ciaran Mabach"), Màiri ni'n Alasdair Ruaidh, Roderick Morrison ("An Clàrsair Dall"), and Lachlan MacKinnon ("Lachlainn Mac Thearlaich Oig").

That culture was not neglected is evident from the patronage that was extended to the bards. The MacBeathaigs, as bards to the MacDonalds, were succeeded by the MacRurys, who flourished about this time; and, in virtue of their office, they possessed the district of Achadh nam Bard, in Trotarnish. The works of these bards have practically all been lost, with the exception of some stray pieces by one, Duncan, of that name, that survive in the Fernaig MS.

That the bards exerted a powerful influence on the minds of the people at that time is attested by the enactment in the "Regulations for Chiefs," forbidding the encouragement of bards, who were included in the class of "sorners." It was decreed that they were to be punished in the stocks; and after that, if they did not cease from composing, they were to be banished, for "they defylit the haill isles."

The bards sang the praises of those who won distinction in war, and they extolled the virtues of courage and of chivalry. They were thus a potent moral force in the community, and they kept the lamp of learning alight, for they were the living repositories of the literature of the race. Knowing that their deeds would be extolled in song, men gave of their best; and, fired with the hope of glory, they fought in deadly earnest in order to attract the attention of the bard, and to win his approbation. We can imagine what pride Sir James MacDonald of Sleat would have taken in Iain Lom's panegyric, "A Bhean Leasaich an Stòp Dhuinn," for the part he took in bringing to justice the murderers of the "Children" of Keppoch; and what an incentive to emulate the prowess of their fathers the same author's "Latha Inbhir Lòchaidh" would be to the youth who listened to its triumphant notes in praise of the MacDonalds, and its scathing ridicule of the vanquished men of Argyle!

The office of bard was hereditary, and it was the duty of the father to dedicate and train one of his sons who showed the greatest talent, but preferably the oldest, to his own calling. There was thus often a long succession of poets, who acted in the capacity of bard to a chief. We can at once perceive how such a practice would affect culture, for the bards made the poetry and the lore of their predecessors their province, and they transmitted their knowledge to the following generation. When the Highland Society was engaged, towards the end of the eighteenth century, in its researches to discover how much of the Ossianic poetry then existed in the Highlands, there is in the report they issued a declaration by one, Lachlan MacVurich, son of Neil MacVurich, the last hereditary bard of that name to Clan Ranald, that he believed his father was the seventeenth in direct descent from Muireach, the first of his line.

Like that of bard, the office of physician also was a hereditary one; and the earliest members of that profession, of whom we have any record in Skye, were the MacBeths, or Beatons, or Bethunes. They are said by Cathelus MacVurich to have been a native race; and nothing has arisen anent their history to confute that statement. There seems to be no doubt that they practised their calling under the regime of the Lords of the Isles. There was a long succession of them in Sleat, where they acted as physicians to the MacDonalds. The family was held in high esteem, both for the culture that distinguished it and for the marvellous proficiency they displayed in the practice of their profession.

This feature of their character has been crystallised into a proverb, for they are still referred to as:

"Clann 'ic Bheatha a' ghnàth ghrinn,
Luchd snaidheadh chnàmh is chuislean."
(MacBeths of the polished ways,
Men who slit bones and veins.)

Farther references will be made to this illustrious family when we come to deal with the septs of the island.

Mention should here be made of another race of physicians that arose in Skye at this time, and was destined to bear a distinguished name through many generations. They were the MacLeans, the first of whom is said to have been brought from Ireland by Ronald Hearach, a cousin of Donald Gruamach, the fifth chief of the MacDonalds of Sleat. Lands were assigned to this family at Cuidreach, on the west side of Trotarnish, but their descendants were afterwards removed to Shulista, and they held that township rent-free when they became physicians to the MacDonalds. Like the Beatons, they were noted for their wide and deep knowledge of botany, and especially of the medicinal property of herbs. They wrote voluminously on the various branches of their profession; and the last of them, Dr. John MacLean, was a highly accomplished man, as is attested by many a contemporary writer. He died in the year 1790; and, in addition to his having occupied the office of physician to the MacDonalds, he acted also, for some time, in the capacity of chamberlain to that family for the district of Trotarnish.

MUSIC.

From earliest times the harp held sway as the principal musical instrument. In the household of every chief the harper occupied an honourable place, while itinerant minstrels received as much patronage as was accorded to them elsewhere in Scotland at that time. They came even from Ireland, whither the chiefs sent their own musicians to be trained, and were often heard in the halls of the chiefs of Skye. In "Cumha Mhic Leoid," Màiri ni'n Alasdair Ruaidh makes mention of these wandering harpers when she sings of Dunvegan, where:

"Bu bhinn caismeachd sgeòil,
Aig luchd astair,
'S ceòil na h-Eireann."

The office of harper was continued in Skye until about the beginning of the eighteenth century, when the last, and certainly the most versatile of all our island harpists, Roderick Morrison ("An Clarsair Dall") died in Dunvegan.

Towards the beginning of the sixteenth century, a serious rival to the harp, and one that was destined to supersede it, was introduced into Skye. This was the bagpipe; and although few of the old bards make mention of it, there can be no doubt that it was in use even earlier than this time. Thus, one of the famous succession of family bards to the Clan Ranald, namely, Nial Mor Mac Vurich, the son of Lachlan Mor, who exhorted the Highlanders with his war-songs on the field of Harlaw, has left a metrical account of the pipe that has fortunately been preserved. It is called by him "Seannachus Sloinnidh na Pìob Mhór Bho Thùs," or "History of the Descent of the Bagpipes from the Earliest Times," and it was composed about the middle of the fifteenth century. He traces the development of the instrument from the time when it consisted only of a chanter, mouthpiece, and one drone:

"A' cheud mhàla nach robh binn,
Thainig bho thùs na Dilinn.

. . . .

Cha robh 'nuair sin anns a' phiob,
Ach sionnsair, agus aon liop,
Agus maide, chumadh na fuinn,
Do 'm b' ainm an sumaire.
Tamull dhaibh 'n deidh sin
Do thuair as-innleachd innleachd,
Agus chinnich na tri cinn innt',
Fear dhiubh fada, leobhar, garbh,
Ri durdan reamhar ro shearbh."

It may be interesting here to record the bequest by Mr. R. Glen, F.S.A. (Scot.), of a set of Highland bagpipes to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, in the year 1911. The instrument, which bore the date 1409, consisted of a chanter, mouthpiece, and the two small drones which were inserted in one stock, thus showing that the large drone had not then been introduced.

The MacCrimmons early rose to pre-eminence in the Highlands as exponents of this noble instrument; but, since a sketch of the family is to be given at the end of this century, farther reference to them will be reserved till then.

What the MacCrimmons were to the MacLeods, so, though in a lesser degree, were the MacArthurs in Trotarnish, and the Macintyres in Sleat, to the MacDonalds. The MacArthurs claimed to have been pipers to the Lords of the Isles; but although such an assertion is difficult to substantiate, as there is no record to show that the Lords of the Isles had ever employed bagpipe players, there may be something in the claim, in view of the facts that have been stated above.

Like the MacCrimmons, the MacArthurs also conducted a musical college; but, in spite of professional jealousy and the pride of race, they did not consider it an indignity to seek from their great rivals the secret whereby the latter drew their magic music from the pipes. We know that Charles MacArthur, who is described by the traveller and author, Thomas Pennant, as a "master of his instrument," had studied under Padruig Og Mac Crimmon. This family occupied Hunglatter, in Kilmuir, rent free until the end of the eighteenth century; and it is noteworthy that in 1733 their holding was valued at 84 marks "of silver duty."

CUSTOMS.

FOSTERAGE.

One of the most interesting customs then, and during several succeeding ages, was that of fosterage. In effect, this practice meant that the child of a superior was handed over to a man of inferior rank, to be maintained by the latter till the age of fourteen years in the case of a girl, and seventeen in that of a boy. It was an honour that was assiduously coveted; for many a privilege accrued to the fosterer in virtue of his office, and principally that of protection both for himself and for his kindred.

In return for such advantages, the fosterparent had to provide some money, or its equivalent in stock, as soon as the contract was initiated; and this, ‘‘with its increase,’’ was to become the property of the foster-child on the expiry of his term of fosterage.

This bond of relation seems to have been stronger even than that of blood, as our Gaelic proverbs bear eloquent testimony, *e.g.*, ‘‘Is caomh le fear a charaid, ach is smior a' chnàimh a chodhalta’’ (Beloved by a man is his friend, but as the marrow of his bone his foster-brother), and ‘‘Codhaltas gu ceud, 's càirdeas gu fichead’’ (Fosterage to a hundred, friendship to twenty degrees).

Of the services mutually rendered by persons in the relation of fosterage, we have numerous instances in the historical records of Skye; and they all attest the fidelity and devotion that that relationship entailed. There is extant a notice of fosterage between John MacLeod of Dunvegan (Iain Mór) and the Rev. Neil MacKinnon, who was minister of Strath and Sleat. The fosterling was afterwards the famous Iain Breac MacLeod, the patron of the arts, and the generous chief. The date of the contract is 1638. By it MacLeod engages to lay aside a sum of 600 merks, the amount of which is to be his son's portion, when the fosterage ends, while MacKinnon undertakes to ‘‘foster, maintain, and upbring the said John in the fear of God, and with God's assistance to save him from fire, water, and all such accidents which may ensue.’’

MANRENT.

There was another custom that bore a certain resemblance to fosterage, and it was termed ‘‘manrent.’’ This was an undertaking between two parties, one of whom sought the protection of another more powerful than himself, and, in return for that privilege, the inferior promised to serve his protector with the full strength of his clan by land and sea. The contract entered into by the former was the true Bond of Manrent, while the obligation binding the latter was distinguished as the Bond of Maintenance. Out of many such documents that are concerned with Skye, the following is singled out. It was drawn up in the year 1601 between Archibald, the seventh Earl of Argyle, and Lachlan MacKinnon of Strath. It begins by commenting on the age-long friendship that had existed between Argyle and the MacKinnons, and it proceeds to state that those party to the contract henceforth wish to continue in a state of friendship. Accordingly, Argyle promises "to protect, maintain, and defend the said Lachlan MacKinnon and his dependents," as he would those of his own kindred; and, in return, MacKinnon binds himself to serve Argyle "as his master and protector."

CALPA.

Calpa was the name given to the exaction demanded of a vassal by his superior for the privilege of protection for himself and his family. It was the custom, on the death of his vassal, for the chief to take his choice of the horses or of the cows of the deceased. The practice naturally lent itself to great abuse, for it was no uncommon thing for more than one superior to lay claim to calpa, and to take it willy-nilly from the dead man's relatives. The custom had been abolished in the south of Scotland as early as 1510 by King James IV., but it lingered on in the Highlands until, by the "Regulations for Chiefs" of 1616, it was decreed that it was to end. The clause is as follows: "His Majesty's lieges have sustained great skayth these many years by the chiefs of clans within the Highlands and Isles of his kingdom, by taking from them, their children, and executors, after their decease, under the name of caulpes, of their best aucht, whether it be ane mare, or horse, or cow, alleging their predecessors to have been in possession thereof for maintaining and defending them against their enemies."

In spite of this regulation, the practice was continued in Skye for many generations after this. The Rev. John MacKinnon, who wrote the New Statistical Account for Strath in 1841, says that "until recently the custom of the laird to take the best horse from a tenant's farm, on the death of the occupier, was observed"; and an account is given of the reason why the custom was abolished. On the death of a tenant in Strath, the ground officer went, as was usual in such circumstances, to the widow's house, and demanded the best horse. The widow vainly resisted, and was roughly treated by the proprietor's functionary. She pronounced her malison on him; and vowed vengeance through her infant son, who was then but a year old. Seventeen years had elapsed, when the same official had occasion to perform a similar service in a neighbouring township, where he also maltreated the defenceless widow. News of the outrage came to the ears of Dunnacha Mór, the son of that widow who had suffered at the hands of the laird's instrument seventeen years previously; and the young giant rose, pursued the officer, and, when he overtook him, battered him so savagely that he killed the man. He then cut off his head, washed it in Tobar a' Chinn, and presented it at the laird's gate. When the whole story was told, the young man was pardoned; and it is said that he was appointed ground-officer for the district in succession to the man he had killed.

The customs observed at birth, and at baptism, deserve mention here. The belief prevailed in that age, and even for many generations after it, that a child, left unattended, was always in danger of being kidnapped by fairies, who left one of their own kind in the cradle in its place. The changeling invariably proved to be most refractory in behaviour, and troublesome in every way; so that the utmost precaution was taken to guard the human offspring, and to carry out the customary rites that would insure its immunity from the attention of the "little folk." It was therefore considered necessary to walk round the mother and the babe with a burning peat, or a piece of flaming pine, seven times in the morning, and as often in the evening, until the child was baptised.

On the way to church for the ceremony of baptism, cakes of bread were taken ("bonnaich bhaistidh"), pieces of which were served to all who might be met on the way. If several children were to be baptised at the same time, precedence was always given to the boys, for it was held that if a girl were baptised before all the boys had been attended to, she would grow a beard when she attained womanhood. After the baptism was over, and the parents had returned home, the ceremony of purification was performed. In this, the practice was to fill a basket with bread, hang it to the pot-chain, and transfer the child over it seven times from the arms of the parents, who stood on opposite sides of the fire-place.

MARRIAGES.

Records of marriage contracts, as we know them now, are very rare in the Western Isles until after the middle of this century. The form of marriage commonly in vogue before that time was that termed "Handfast," or left-handed marriage. It was purely a probationary union, in which a couple agreed to cohabit for a year and a day; and if during that time they discovered they were not suited to one another by temperament, or otherwise, they were free to dissolve the contract at the expiry of the customary period, with this obligation, however, that the man was to maintain any offspring of the union, and return whatever portion the "trial" wife might have brought him. Should the partners, however, decide to continue in wedlock beyond the prescribed period, the marriage was held to be legally binding, and any children born previous to the final agreement were to be considered legitimate.

Martin, a Skyeman, who wrote about 1716, makes mention of this form of marriage, as follows: "It was an ancient custom in the Isles that a man take a maid to his wife, and keep her for the space of a year without marrying her; and if she pleased him all the while, he married her at the end of the year, and legitimatised her children; but if he did not love her, he returned her to her parents."

We have already seen that this manner of union led to one of the most disastrous wars ever fought between the MacLeods and the MacDonalds of Skye, when Donald Gorm Mor, who handfasted with Margaret MacLeod, a sister of Rory Mor of Dunvegan, expelled his mistress so ignominiously from Duntulm. It is, indeed, not improbable that it was as a result of this war that Lord Ochiltree's Committee was induced to insert a clause in the Statutes of Iona by which "marriages contracted for several years" were prohibited; and any who might disregard this regulation were to be "punished as fornicators."

It is not easy to say how soon after this the practice of handfasting fell into desuetude in Skye, but from our knowledge of the way the other sections of the Statutes were infringed, we are led to conclude that this one also was "more honoured in the breach than the observance."

Manner of Living and Habits of the People.

So far as food was concerned, enough could be raised locally to supply the ordinary needs of the people. Indeed, the only article they did import was wine; and a brisk trade it then proved to be in the Western Isles. The trafficking in the wines of France and Spain began about the middle of the sixteenth century; but until its last decade the people of Skye were fairly temperate.

Soon, however, the love of strong drink was to seize gentle and semple alike, and great excesses were the result. In the "Regulations for Chiefs" issued in 1616, mention is made of the lawlessness and the misery that followed from this inordinate indulgence in intoxicating liquors. It asserts that "The great and extraordinary excesses in drinking wines, commonly used among the commons and tenants of the Isles, is not only one occasion of the beastly and barbarous cruelties and inhumanities that fall out among them, to the offence and the displeasure of God, and the contempt of law and justice, but with that it draws numbers of them to miserable necessity and poverty."

If the voice of tradition and the written records speak true, we are forced to the conclusion that this account of the state of affairs is not overdrawn. We have already referred to the drunken orgies that marked the close of the war known as "Cogadh na Cailliche Caime," and also to the large amount of debt incurred by Sir Rory Mor solely for strong drink. We need not wonder at the enactment, passed in 1616, restricting the consumption of wine in his household to "four tuns per annum to be bought from the south"; but this regulation was never observed, and a similar disregard was paid to the edict, passed in 1622, by the Privy Council, aimed at those masters of ships who smuggled wines into the Western Isles.

In "The Bards of Clan Donald" there is an interesting song that is said to have been composed by the nurse of Donald Gorm Og, the first baronet of Sleat, in praise of a birlinn, or galley, the chief had constructed. Speaking of the luxurious equipment of that noble ship, she says:

"Tha stiuir òir oirr',
Tri cruinn sheilich,
Gu'm bheil tobar fiona,
Shios 'na deireadh;
'S tobar fior-uisg',
'S a' cheann eile."

It is a lengthy poem; and in it references are made to the recreations that were then in vogue, and it throws a flood of light on the home life of that time. The poetess adverts to the practice of tale-telling; the music of the pipe, and the harp; the joy of the dance; indoor games with draughts, dice, and cards; outdoor sports, such as leaping, wrestling, football, etc.; but there is no mention of shinty:

> "Gu'm bi mire, cluich 's gàire,
> Bualadh bhiog, leòis air deàrnaibh,
> Bidh sud 's iomairt, hò! air tàileasg,
> Air na cairtean breaca, bàna,
> 'S air na dìsnean geala, cnàmha.
>
> . . . .
>
> Bidh sud mar ghnàths ann, ceòl, is seanchas,
> Piòb, 's clàrsach, àbhachd, 's dannsa.
>
> . . . .
>
> Bidh deanamh chleasa leat, da chiad diag;
> Bidh iomairt a' bhuil choise leat, da chiad diag."

TRADE.

In the early part of the seventeenth century there was great abundance of fish around the shores of Skye, especially herring, cod, and ling. The natives, however, derived little benefit from this source of wealth, for the enterprising among them cared little for the industry; and, in any case, their methods of catching the fish were inadequate and crude. A rich harvest was, however, garnered from our sea lochs by fishers who hailed from the east coast of Scotland, and even from Holland; and it seems they made enormous profits during the period from 1620 until 1640.

If we are to take the numerous proclamations issued by the Privy Council at their face value, there can be no doubt that those engaged in the fishing industry were often subjected to grievous molestation by the men of Skye. In 1622 the three chiefs, Rory Mor, Donald Gorm Og, and Lachlan MacKinnon, were sternly warned by the Privy Council to cease from troubling the strangers who fished around their shores; and, in 1634, a Commission was appointed, under Lord Lorn and the Bishop of the Isles, to inquire into the allegations made regarding the heavy duties that were exacted from fishermen—"to the great prejudice of the king's subjects when fishing in the Isles."

This Commission seems to have done its work very thoroughly, and, among others, the chiefs of Skye were cited to present themselves at Inveraray, in order to give evidence; and all obeyed, except MacKinnon, for whom deputised "Lachlan MacCharles MacFingon."

They were severally questioned by what authority they imposed fines on fishermen who plied their trade in Skye; and their answer was that they were within their rights, as heritors of land, to exact ground-leave and anchorage, "it being the ancient custom, and in use to be done past the memory of man." They further state that the amount of the dues exacted before 1620 for specified items was as follows: For every anchor laid on shore they charged 6s 8d; for ground-leave they demanded one barrel of ale or of meal, according to the occupier's option, and £3 for every last (12 barrels) of herrings taken, together with the whole of Saturday's fishing.

After the year 1620, however, in accordance with a contract concluded with the fishermen themselves, the contribution agreed upon was 36s per boat employed during the whole year, and 20s if they were engaged in winter fishing only.

Still, the relation between the fishermen and the natives was seldom very cordial. A proclamation was issued in 1635 drawing the attention of the chiefs of Skye to the "great insolences committed on fishers by the islanders in bands, who go to the lochs where the fishing is carried on, and rob the men of fish, victual, and gear, break shoals of herrings, and hinder them in their industry."

It was about the end of this period that the traffic in cattle-dealing was established in Skye. It had been initiated by the enterprise of the warrior-bard, Do'ull MacIain 'ic Sheamuis. This pioneer of an important industry took numerous droves to Falkirk and to Crieff, and thus was established a trade that was destined to be the principal source of wealth in the island for many generations.

Indeed, it seems that Skye was then in the enjoyment of a remarkable measure of prosperity. Clan warfare had ceased; and its attendant evils, such as reiving and the burning of crops, were no longer to be dreaded. The peasant could now cultivate the soil in the confidence that nothing but adverse weather conditions could interfere with the garnering of his crops; and the industry of cattle-rearing could be safely developed, for there was no longer any fear of the creach.

AGRICULTURE.

No great change falls to be recorded in the methods of tillage, or in the nature of the crops that were then reared in Skye. Root crops had not yet made their appearance, and only cereals, such as oats, barley, and rye, were grown. Arable land was still held on the communal basis, and the runrig system was the vogue. By it, each individual in a tuath, or community, had to take whatever plot was allotted to him by the maor, or ground officer, who apportioned the fields once a year.

Tillage was effected by means of the spade; and although many have declared that the caschrom, or the crooked spade, was not introduced until the advent of the potato, there can be no doubt that it was in use at this time, however long before. In the poem, "B' annsa Cadal air Fraoch," by "An Ciaran Mabach," the brother of Sir James MacDonald of Sleat, who lived in this period, reference is made to the implement:

" . . . . Uiginnis riabhach,
An tric a dh'iarr mi 'n damh-donn,
'S a bhi triall thun nam bodach,
Da'm bu chosnadh caschrom."

In order to replenish the soil, the chief manures in use were the smoke-saturated thatch, cattle bedding, and the ashes of the peat fires. The last was considered of great potency, especially on peaty soil, and the method by which it was spread on the land was comical in its primitiveness. According to the authors of "Clan Donald," a creel filled with ashes was carried pick-a-back by a woman, while her husband, travelling light, walked leisurely behind her, hitting the laden creel the while with a stout cudgel, and sending clouds of dust around with every vigorous stroke.

The comedy of this method of manuring, which seems to have been confined to the west side of Trotarnish, roused the satirical faculty of a native of the east side, who derisively described the custom in the following quatrain:

" Am fasan a bh'ac' ann an Uige,
Chan fhaca' mi riamh am dhùthaich,
Gabhail le bat' air mo chùlthaobh,
'S smùid as a' chliabh luatha."

Owing to the boom in cattle-dealing that had then set in, the native black cattle were reared in large numbers on the straths and the hills of Skye. As an indication of the magnitude of the herds, we may instance a dowry conferred by Sir Rory Mor of Dunvegan on one of his daughters, Moire, who was married to John MacDonald of Moidart. It consisted of "nine score good kye, with twenty others, if the said John shall desire them."

Large droves of cattle from Skye were sold every year in the markets of the Lowlands, and more money then circulated in the island than ever before. As a result of the enhanced price of cattle, the value of land appreciated in proportion, so that tacksmen had to pay a higher rental for the land they occupied.

It may be mentioned that there were notable tacksmen then in Skye, as the MacAskills of Ru'n Dunain; the MacDonalds of Kingsburgh, of Skerinish, and of Castleton of Sleat; the MacLeods of Talisker, of Drynoch, of Gesto, etc., the Nicolsons of Scorrybreck; the MacQueens of Garrafad; the Martins of Bealach, and the MacSweens of Roag.

WEAPONS.

The commonest weapon was still the bow. Numerous references are made to it by the poets of this period, and it continued in use for a considerable time after this. In the exhortation by Iain Lom addressed to Sir James MacDonald of Sleat on the murder of the "Children" of Keppoch, that famous poet says:

> "Bidh an t-iubhar 'ga lùbadh,
> Aig do fhleasgaichean ùra,
> Dol a shiubhal nan stùc-bheann,"

the bows being made of ash.

The sword and the lance, or pike, were also in use, while a crude sort of arquebuse had then found its way to Skye, and would seem to have been fairly common. In a quern-song composed by Do'ull MacIāin 'ic Sheamuis, we find the verse:

> "Chà b'e deatach dhubh 'n dùdain,
> Chleachd thusa bhi 'n tùrlach t' athar;
> Ach fir òga losgadh fùdair,
> Ri mire, ri mùirn, 's ri aighear";

and the Skye bard, "An Ciaran Mabach," says:

> "Cha leig mi mo ghaothar,
> Ri faoghaid an tuim bhàin,
> 'S cha sgaoil mi mo luaidhe,
> An Gleann Ruathain gu bràth,"

thus showing clearly that firearms were then in use in Skye.

And we have corroborative evidence in the record of a meeting held at Duntulm in the year 1628, when the island chiefs, John MacLeod of Dunvegan, Sir Donald MacDonald of Sleat, Sir Lachlan MacKinnon of Strath, and Alexander MacGillechalum of Raasay, together with the Earl of Seaforth, assembled there, in order to devise means for preventing poaching on their respective estates. An order was issued that no one was to hunt with hound, bow, or hagbut, unless he is in possession of a licence from his chief; and it is interesting to note that the game to be preserved were the hart, hind, roe, and doe, "and any other beasts in the forest." Anyone found trespassing was to surrender his weapons to the forester, and was to be "punished in his body as his superior pleases." That the chiefs took a serious view of poaching, and were determined to stamp it out, is shown by the severity of the punishment they decreed for the first offence. A fine of 100 marks was to be imposed on any who was caught "in the act," and his weapons and his hounds were to be forfeited.

Such weapons as swords and guns were made by the hereditary armourers of the chiefs. The MacRurys of Baile Ghobhain, in Kilmuir, acted in that capacity to the MacDonalds, and the MacLeods of Suardal performed similar services to the chiefs of Dunvegan. The work of these armourers was of a very high order, and the designs they engraved on the weapons showed great artistic skill.

CHAPTER IX.

FAMILY HISTORY, 1650-1700.

THE MACDONALDS.

SIR JAMES MOR, SECOND BARONET OF SLEAT.

WE have seen that a large contingent of the MacDonalds were fighting under Montrose during the Great Civil War. After the defeat of the Royalists on the field of Philiphaugh, in 1649, a large part of the Highland army deserted. In the following year Charles, the son of the late king, was crowned at Scone, and he received the enthusiastic support of the Scottish Covenanters. Sir James MacDonald was forthwith commanded to raise his men, as were the other chiefs of Skye, and he readily responded to the summons; but it would appear that he himself took no active part in the affair, and, like the MacLeods, the MacDonalds marched into England with the Covenanting army, but without their chief. At Worcester, on the 3rd of September, 1651, the Highland Brigade had to bear the full brunt of the onslaught of Cromwell's forces, and the clans were severely cut up and scattered in hopeless flight. In small bands, and by devious ways, the fugitive Skyemen made their way home, after having endured months of terrible hardship. Those who were taken prisoners in the battle were consigned as slaves to the plantations of America.

When once the disaffection to his government had somewhat subsided, Cromwell displayed a great amount of forbearance towards the Highlanders who had taken up arms against him; and whether it was the magnanimous spirit shown by the Protector that appealed to him, or the fear of reprisals that actuated him, Sir James was soon busy trying to win favour with the Commonwealth. In this he succeeded; and we find that in 1653 he went so far as to write a letter from Duntulm apprising Colonel Fitch, the governor of the Castle at Inverness, of the activities of Glengarry and other Highland chiefs to coerce him to rise in rebellion; and he received the commendation of the government for his loyalty at a time when many of the Highland chiefs were still in open revolt.

In view of his compliance with the Republican party, it was but natural that he should be moved with deep concern when the Restoration took place; and it says much for his acumen and ingratiating ways that he succeeded so well with the Royalist government as he did. Within a year of the accession of Charles II. he had managed to secure confirmation of the charter that had been granted to his grand-uncle, Donald Gorm Mor, in 1614; while in 1665 the Royalist government armed him with a "commission of fire and sword" against the murderers of the heir of Keppoch and his brother. He carried out this behest with alacrity, though at first he was loth to take action, as is indicated in several places in the works of the bard, Iain Lom, *e.g.*:

> "Sir Seumas nan tùr 's nam baideal,
> Gheibh luchd mùirne cuirm 'na d'aitreabh;
> Ged a rinn thu 'n dùsal cadail,
> 'S éibhinn leam do dhùsgadh maduinn."

A strong force of the MacDonalds, under the command of the versatile Archibald MacDonald ("An Ciaran Mabach"), the chief's half-brother, and the redoubtable Do'ull MacIain 'ic Sheamuis, was despatched to Inverlaraich, in Lochaber, where they soon brought the usurpers to justice. A special letter of thanks was sent to Sir James by the Privy Council, acknowledging "the singular service he had done to his country, and assuring him that it would not pass unrewarded," with many other clauses much to Sir James' honour.

Sir James added the supporting leopards to the family coat-of-arms that Iain Lom has so skilfully described in verse:

> "B'e do shuaicheantas taitneach,
> Long is leomhann is bradan,
> Air cuan liobharra 'n aigeal;
> 'S an crann fioguis gun ghaiseadh,
> Chuireadh fion dheth le pailteas;
> Làmh dhearg roimh 'n ghaisgeach nach tiom."

This chief was noted for his prudence—"a man of very great ability and judgment," he was characterised by the government of Cromwell; and for a time the affairs of the clan, under his peaceful rule, were in a flourishing condition. In later life, however, he began to frequent the cities of the south, and there he entertained on a lavish scale. Numerous guests visited also at Duntulm, and at Armadale, where all was gaiety and unfailing generosity:

> "'Nàm gluasad bho thir dhuinn,
> Bu neomhiodhar ar lòistean,
> Cornach, cupanach, fionach,
> Glaineach, liontaidh a stòpaibh,"

sings "An Ciaran Mabach" of his brother's munificence.

It seems, however, that this extraordinary liberality had plunged the estate deeply in debt, and it led to domestic troubles that caused much anxiety to the clan. Quarrels between the chief and his oldest son became so acute as to induce the wadsetters to threaten the deposition of the one and to refuse to recognise the other as heir. The execution of this decision was, however, obviated by the death of Sir James in 1678.

He was married, first, to Margaret MacKenzie of Tarbat. By her he had a large family, of whom the following are known to history: Donald, his successor; Hugh of Glenmore, John of Bernisdale, Somerled of Sartil, and James of Aird, in Sleat, who was killed when gallantly fighting at Killiecrankie in 1689. The chief's second wife was Mary, the sister of Iain Breac MacLeod of Dunvegan; and by her he had several sons and a daughter, Elizabeth, who became the wife of the Rev. Hugh MacDonald, the first minister of the parish of Portree.

Two very touching elegies were composed on his death—one by the Lochaber bard, Iain Lom, and the other by his own devoted brother, Archibald, "An Ciaran Mabach." One verse from the lament of the latter is quoted because of the mellifluence of its diction, the genuineness of its feeling, and its elegant and beautifully fashioned phrase:

> "O'n chaill mi mo fhradharc
> 'S nach tadhail mi 'n ard-bheinn,
> Chuir mi cul ris an fhiadhach,
> Pong cha'n iarr mi air clàrsaich;
> Mo cheol laidhe, is éirigh,
> 'M osnadh gheur air bheag tàbhachd,
> Fad mo ré bi mi 'g acain
> Mheud 's a chleachd mi dhe d'-àilgheas."

It may be of interest to note here the statement made by the Sleat sennachie, Hugh MacDonald, who flourished at this time, and has left on record a useful and reliable history of Clan

Donald, that "the family of Sleat can produce a paper signed by all the principal men of the name (MacDonald), wherein they acknowledge, as head of the family, MacDonald of Sleat."

THE MACLEODS.

In order to record the contemporary history of the MacLeods, it is necessary to go back to the year 1649, when John, Iain Mór, the chief of Dunvegan, died, and left as his heir a minor, who was afterwards known as Roderick, "the Witty." The office of tutor, or regent, devolved on the late chief's oldest brother, Roderick of Talisker.

We have seen that Charles Stuart was crowned at Scone in 1650, and that the Covenanting Parliament called all Scotland to his support. The MacLeods answered the call with enthusiasm; over 700 of the men of Skye were marshalled on the gathering ground of the clan, Lag Buidhe, in Balmeanach. Thence they marched south, exhilarated by the stirring strains of the piobaireachd of Pàdruig Mór MacCrimmon. They were joined by 300 of the men of Harris, under the leadership of Norman of Bernera; and the combined force, now 1000 strong, followed the young king in the disastrous march into England. At Worcester no clan suffered so severely as the MacLeods, and so great were their casualties that it was agreed to exempt them from military service for several years, in order that the clan might be able to recuperate. It is said that about 700 of them were slain, among whom were two of the sons of MacLeod of Meadle, namely, William and Alexander. Màiri ni'n Alasdair Ruaidh refers to the part they then played in one of her songs, "Fuaim an t-Saimh," when she says:

> "Bha fios co sibh,
> Ann an iomartas rìgh,
> 'Nuair bu mhuladach strì Thearlaich."

Roderick of Talisker, who was knighted before the battle, succeeded, after many hardships and romantic adventures, in making his escape to Skye; but his brother, Norman, was captured, tried for his life, but acquitted owing to a technical error in the indictment. After an incarceration of eighteen months, he managed to make good his escape; but the harshness of his treatment helped only to intensify his ardour for the Royalist cause. He served on several dangerous embassies, to Prince Charles in Paris, to the King of Denmark, and to the Dutch Government, which entrusted him with the commission of taking to Scotland a large consignment of much-needed arms and ammunition; and he successfully carried out the project. These exploits of his no doubt led his panegyrist to refer to him as:

"..... Sealgair na frìth
Nach bu chearbach do'n righ,
Agus seirbhiseach dìleas a' chrùin."

The Highlanders rose once again in 1654, but, owing to the incapacity of their generals, they could not entertain much hope of victory.

The end of the insurrection came when, on 26th July, 1654, the clans, under General Middleton, were signally defeated by General Morgan at Loch Garry. Thence many of the chiefs repaired to Dunvegan, whither they were escorted by Norman of Bernera.

Norman of Bernera.

It was to this romantic personage that Màiri Ni'n Alasdair Ruaidh composed most of her songs, and not to a chief of MacLeod, as has been erroneously stated by MacKenzie in his "The Beauties of Gaelic Poetry." It is worthy of notice that the bardess often styles her hero "Sir"; but, as is well known, no chief of Dunvegan was ever knighted with the exception of Sir Rory Mor, who died in 1626. Such of her poems as "Fuaim an t-Saimh," "An Talla 'm bu Ghnàth le MacLeoid," "Cumha Mhic Leoid," and "Luinneag Mhic Leoid"—all have as their subject Sir Norman of Bernera; and, as has been correctly suggested, her panegyrics on a cadet of the clan, and her neglect of the chief, were really the reasons why she had been sent into exile.

Sir Norman was the kind of man that was bound to impress an unsophisticated race. He was blessed with great personal beauty, princely generosity, gallant bearing; and he was endowed with a lofty purpose and a staunch integrity of conduct—qualities to which admirable expression is given by the poetess of Dunvegan:

"Fear do chéille. 's do ghliocais,
Do mhisneach, 's do mheanma,
Do chruadail, 's do ghaisge,
Do dhreach, is do dhealbha,
Agus t'-òlachd, 's t'-uaisle,
Cha bu shuarach ri leanmhuinn."

Along with his brother, William, afterwards of Hamera, Norman was a student of Glasgow University in the year 1632. He was married first to Margaret MacKenzie of Kintail, by whom he had a son, John (of Contullich), who has been immortalised in a "Luinneag" by Màiri Ni'n Alasdair Ruaidh.

On the death of his first wife, Norman married Catherine, the eldest daughter of Sir James MacDonald of Sleat:

"Fhuair thu fortan bho Dhia
Bean bu shocraiche cial
'S i gu foisteannach, fial, nàrach."

. . . .

"'S tric a riaraich thu cuilm,
Gun fhiabhras gun tuilg,
Nighean oighre Dhun Thuilm, slan dhut."

In the "Book of Clan Ranald" there occurs an elegy, written to Sir Norman, probably by one of the MacVurichs. In it the date of his death is definitely stated:

"Sechd cced deg sa do re riom
'Stri bliadhna aois a nardriogh
Orslat budh cneasda do chi
Go teasda romha Ruaidhri."

He died on 3rd March, 1705, and a touching lament was composed to him by Màiri ni'n Alasdair Ruaidh.

"An treas latha de'n Mhart,
Dh'fhalbh m' aighear gu bràth:
Be sud saighead mo chràidh
Bhi 'g amharc do bhàis,
A' ghnuis fhlathasaidh àillt," etc.

It may be of interest to note that the sword of Sir Norman, now hanging on the wall in a lobby in the castle of Dunvegan, was gifted to the chief by the late Captain Norman MacLeod of Orbost.

As has been already stated, the principal leaders of the Royalist army went to Dunvegan after their defeat at Loch Garry, and in those hospitable halls they passed the winter of 1654-55. There they deliberated in earnest conferences as to the course they should then pursue; and it was at length decided that, as they were so lacking in money, munitions, and men, they should strive to make the best terms possible with the Commonwealth; and, owing to the tolerant spirit the government had displayed to the rebels, this was an easy matter. Long before this time they had been assured that, if they submitted, the sentences of forfeiture on their estates would be abrogated.

Through the influence of General Monk, who had been left by Cromwell in charge of the affairs of Scotland, a basis of agreement was effected. By it the Chief of MacLeod was to be pardoned; but he was enjoined to arrest his uncles "if he can," and surrender them to the government. He was to find security in £6000 for his future behaviour, and Sir James MacDonald of Sleat became his surety. That sum was to be refunded to the guarantor when a fine of £2500 had been paid by MacLeod.

Roderick "The Witty," Fifteenth Chief.

Shortly after the Restoration, Roderick, the young chief of MacLeod, went to London to visit the king. In view of what his clan had done, and had lost, for the Stuart cause, it was but natural that he should have set off with high hopes of preferment. But he was sadly disillusioned when he interviewed the ingrate king in Whitehall, for there was not even a mention of the sacrifices the chief's clan had made for his sake. Roderick returned home a disappointed man, vowing, it is said, that, so far as he was able, his clansmen would never again raise a finger on behalf of the Stuarts; and it is a noteworthy fact that his descendants honoured this vow, if ever made, to the very letter.

His visit to London took place in 1661, and from that year until his early death in 1664, most of his time was passed in the cities of the south, where he led a life of great extravagance.

He was married to Margaret, daughter of Sir John Mackenzie, tutor of Tarbat, and by her he had a son and a daughter. His son, Norman, died young, and, in a lament, "Cumha do Mhac

Leoid,'' written by Màiri ni'n Alasdair Ruaidh, on the death of Roderick, she says:

"Ach a Ruairidh Mhic Iain,
'S goirt leam faighinn an sgeul ort,
'S e mo chreachsa mac t-athar
Bhi 'na laighe gun éirigh;
Agus Tormad a mhac san,
A thasgaidh mo cheille,
Gur h-e aobhar mo ghearain
Gu'n do chailleadh le chéil' iad.''

The daughter was married to a Stewart of Appin; and as her brother, the heir, was dead, there was grave concern among the clan that her son might claim the succession to the estates. This feeling of disquiet is adverted to by the bardess in the lament already quoted:

"C'uim a thigeadh fear coigreach,
A thagradh ar n' oighreachd,
Ged nach eil e ro dhearbta,
Gur searbh e ri eisdeachd;
Ged tha sinn air ar creachadh,
Mu chloinn mac an fhir fhéilidh,
Sliochd Ruairi Mhóir alloil,
'S gur airidh iad féin oirr'.''

Sir Roderick of Talisker, who had acted as captain to his clan from 1649 until 1656, lived to a good old age, and died in 1675. Beyond stray references to his liberality, the contemporary poets pay him no tribute in verse.

Iain Breac, The Sixteenth Chief of MacLeod.

At the time of the death of the late chief, the affairs of the Clan MacLeod were at a low ebb indeed. Many causes had contributed to this—the disasters of the late rebellion, but, principally, the excesses of the chief. The estate was loaded with debt; and it was fortunate for the clan that the successor was a man of unselfish motives, who was prepared to work unsparingly to redeem it from its financial embarrassments. This was the famous Iain Breac, who endeared himself to his people by his generosity, his culture, and his great sagacity. Though he was often from home, he did not remain long away, but spent most of his life among his own people. He busied himself in projects for the development of the estate, and by wise organisation and prudent retrenchment he was able to free it of the burden of debt.

The allurements of the cities, and of the court, failed to attract him; and, as he was endowed with a highly refined mind himself, he was able to appreciate the value of the native culture, and he nurtured it with sympathy and care. In his household were the bard, the harper, the piper, and the jester; and he is said to have been the last of the Highland chiefs to maintain that complement of such functionaries in his retinue. Dunvegan Castle was then the hospitable haunt of the wandering bards, the musicians, and the story-tellers, whose influence has been so potent in the moulding of Highland character. The generosity accorded to all who came within its walls inspired the bards to lofty flights in their enthusiastic praise. In one of her songs, "Crònan," or "A Crooning," composed by Màiri ni'n Alasdair Ruaidh on the recovery of Norman, the chief's second son, from a dangerous illness, she describes the castle and its cheer:

"..... Dun tuireideach, àrd,
B'e sud innis nam bàrd,
'S nam filidh ri dàin,
Far 'm bu mhinig an tàmh,
Cha b' ionad gun bhlàthas dhaibh sud";

while Roderick Morrison, the blind harper of the family, bemoaning the changes that had taken place in Dunvegan on the death of Iain Breac, impersonates the echo, once so lustily activated by the sounds of mirth, and the expressions of good cheer, as saying:

"'S mi mactalla bha uair
'G éisdeachd farum nan duan gu tuigh;
Far 'm bu mhuirneach am beus
'Nàm cromadh do'n ghrein 's an t-sruth.
Far am b' fhoirmeil na seòid,
'S iad gu h-òranach, ceòlmhor, cluth,
Ged nach faicte mo ghnùis
Chluinnt' aca 'san Dùn mo ghuth."

And when Iain Breac, the chief of Dunvegan, was engaged in his efforts to retrieve the fallen fortunes of his clan, and in extending his patronage to the arts, the rest of the Highlands was torn asunder by the cruel hands of war. The Revolution had occurred in England, and the last Stuart king had been expelled from the country by a people who were determined to end absolute monarchy. While many of the clans rallied to the support of the fallen House of Stuart, the MacLeods held aloof from the struggle, although a considerable amount of pressure was brought to bear on their chief, both by the other chiefs of the north and by the late king himself. In 1689, Melford, who was then acting as "Secretary of State" to James II., wrote to Iain Breac from Dublin Castle, commanding him to muster his men and join the Royalists, and threatening him with condign penalties should he refuse to obey the summons. Shortly afterwards another letter was addressed to Iain Breac, this time from Viscount Dundee; but it also failed to move him from his state of neutrality. A second note from Dundee, a short time before the Battle of Killiecrankie, was despatched to Iain Breac, apprising him of the fact that most of the Highland chiefs had already joined the Royalist forces, and recommending him, if he wished to share the glory of playing a part in the restoration of the House of Stuart, to throw in his lot with them immediately. Again he declined to rise; and, finally, on the 29th of May, 1690, King James himself wrote from Dublin Castle a letter, which was sent to Sir Donald MacDonald of Sleat, and in which he hints that the Chief of Dunvegan had promised to join the Stuart cause if the king landed in Scotland. This letter is marked by a haughty tone, and a feeling of irritation at the delay on the part of Iain Breac. It proceeds: "This is not the time for any man to make conditions for himself, or to consult barely his own private interests. . . . We are sure you wish your country and posterity too well not to contribute all you can to its liberty." A note of such ungraciousness as that could scarcely have the desired effect upon a proud Highland chief; and, in any case, James' hopes of success were shattered about a month afterwards, when he was so ingloriously defeated at the Battle of the Boyne on the 1st of July, 1690.

Nor did Iain Breac show any ardour for the cause of King William. Whether it was from antagonism to his government, or, what is more probable, that he was taking advantage of the conditions of uncertainty that prevailed in the Highlands after the Revolution, he seems to have withheld the royal rates for a few years; and, by way of intimidation and punishment, troops were quartered on his estate, whence they were not withdrawn until 1692, when he had made the necessary reimbursement to the national exchequer.

After he had stabilised the affairs of the clan, Iain Breac busied himself in improving the amenities of his estates. He effected much-needed repairs on the castle, and, having completed these, he commenced in 1685 to make additions to it. In token of his work there, a stone above one of the lower windows bears a Latin inscription: "Joannes MacLeod, Beganoduni, Dominus gentis suae. Philarchus Diurinisiae, Haraiae, Vaternisiae, etc., Baro D. Florae MacDonald matrimoniali vinculo conjugatus, turrem hanc Beganodunensem, proavorum habitaculum longe vetustissimum, diu penitus labefactatam. Anno aerae vulgaris MDCLXXXVI instauravit."

From this time until his death in 1693, there is little to record of this chief; but the sennachies of Skye fill the blank by means of an interesting tale, the theme of which is the exploit of a family fool.

MacLeod's Fool and the Highwayman.

To the south-west of Loch Garve, in Ross-shire, lies a district called Tarvie, which was once densely wooded, but has sorely been depleted of its timber to meet the exigencies of a nation at war. Through it, in the past, stretched the main thoroughfare to the west from the town of Inverness, and much business was done in olden times by the men of the isles in that city. These woods afforded an effectual harbourage to bands of ruffianly highwaymen, who intercepted travellers and robbed them of whatever money or means they might have in their possession.

Iain Breac had occasion to send his chamberlain, accompanied by two stalwart clansmen, to Inverness, in order to obtain money to pay for the cost of the extensive additions he was making to the castle. On the return journey, by Tarvie Wood, MacLeod's men were waylaid by robbers, who, pointing pistols to their breasts, peremptorily commanded them to deliver up whatsoever monies they possessed. The small band of messengers had no alternative but to comply. The money-bag was handed over in its entirety, and sadly they trudged on their way home to Dunvegan, whither they brought but the report of their loss. As there was pressing need of funds to carry on the new schemes, MacLeod sent another steward; but a similar act of depredation was committed against this man, and he, too, was sent home empty-handed. This considerable loss of "ready" cash greatly worried the chief, so that his harper, his piper, or his bard (and he had all these in his household), had not the art to raise his mind from out of the morass of depression into which it had been plunged by his heavy loss. The family fool was quick enough to notice his master's changed state of mind; and he asked him, in his customary privileged manner, what it was that troubled him. On being told the reason, he announced that he would go to Inverness, and would guarantee that whatever sums were entrusted to him there would be safely delivered over to his chief in Dunvegan.

Naturally enough, the chief refused to countenance his fool embarking on an adventure in which his two most trusted servants had already so signally been foiled. The fool was, however, so very persistent in his solicitation that the chief finally agreed to let him have his way. Preparations were accordingly made, and the best horse in the stable brought out and saddled; but, to the amazement of all, the jester refused to take it, and he demanded instead a superannuated grey mare that was maintained by the chief for sentimental reasons, and had not been on the road for years. The chief now demurred more than ever to the project; but such was the insistence of his retainer that he was prevailed upon to let him go; and away the fool ambled on the ancient nag, followed by the derisive jeers of the bystanders. Many a traveller he met, and all wondered, and laughingly passed him by. After trudging wearily onwards for several days, the messenger at length approached the thief-infested woods of Tarvie. Here he was stopped short by a lithe robber on a high-stepping steed, and was asked whither he was going, and what was his errand. The fool answered blankly that he had been commissioned by the Chief of Dunvegan to go to Inverness for the purpose of conveying home some money. Thereupon the robber asked him if he were to have any escort on his return, and, on being told that none was expected, the thief said that he would be pleased to convoy him a part of the way, as the road he was now on was a very dangerous one. He then asked him on which day he was likely to return, and, on the simpleton telling him, the thief wished him good luck, and returned to his retreat.

Eventually the fool reached Inverness, and, having obtained the amount of money asked for, he deposited it in a bag, filling another with sea-shells. He then repaired to his lodging, saddled the old mare, and began the return journey. He tied the bags to his waist-belt, one on each side of him, and, concealing them under his cloak, made for the west.

On the very day he had appointed, he came once again in sight of the woods of Tarvie; and his would-be benefactor darted out of a coppice by the wayside and rode for some distance beside him. Suddenly the thief whipped out a pistol, and, presenting it to the fool's breast, demanded his money. The latter protested, but he was sternly told to deliver all without further talk. Thereupon the fool took a bag from under his cloak, slung it well down a steep declivity, at the same time saying it would never be imputed to him that he had handed over his master's property to any robber. The highwayman sprang sprightly from the saddle, and ran down the slope to recover the bag; and the seemingly lethargic fool leapt as lightly from his own saddle, mounted the thief's gallant steed, and rode off at full speed, leaving to the robber the old mare, to follow in hopeless pursuit.

A few days afterwards the gocaman, or watcher, on the battlements of Dunvegan marked a rider, on a well-appointed steed, approaching the castle. On coming nearer, the jaunty horseman was seen to be none other than the family fool himself, and all turned out in mock ceremony to welcome his return. But the spirit of derision was soon changed into one of wonder at the splendid horse the fool rode; and their wonder developed into unbounded enthusiasm when it became known that his mission had been successful. In the courtyard of the castle the fool unsaddled the horse, and, leaving it to the care of attendants, carried the saddle into the presence of his chief. On a table he deposited the bag of money he had been commissioned to deliver, and thereupon began to examine the purses of the saddle which were found to contain, not only the amounts stolen from the two previous messengers, but much else besides.

We have already seen that Iain Breac was married to Florence, the second daughter of Sir James MacDonald of Sleat, and the sister of the wife of his uncle, Sir Norman of Bernera. They had three sons, Roderick, Norman, and William, the two oldest of whom were successively chiefs, and the last died young. The daughters were Isabella and Janet. It is interesting to record that the tutor to the family was Martin Martin. He was a native of

Trotarnish, had qualified as a medical practitioner, but had never taken up the profession. He compiled an instructive account, descriptive and sociological, of the Western Isles in 1716.

Iain Breac died in 1693.

> "Ann an seachduin na Ceusda,
> Diciadaoin mo bhristidh,
> Chaill mi iuchair na h-euchdal',
> Cha mhi aon neach is misd e,"

laments the blind harper and bard, Roderick Morrison.

The Rev. Canon R. C. MacLeod of MacLeod says he was buried at Inverness, "where his tomb is still visible"; but the poet Morrison, in his lament for his chief, "Creach nan Ciadan," seems to suggest that he was buried in Rodel of Harris, where so many of his predecessors had found a last resting-place:

> "Tha mo thaic anns na Hearadh
> 'N deidh fhalach 'na aonar."

And again he refers to his body being carried across the sea:

> "'S fhaide seachduinn na bliadhna,
> Bho 'n thriall sibh thar linne,
> Le friamhachd na fialachd,
> Bha 'san lion-bhrat air fhilleadh."

Roderick, The Seventeenth Chief.

And the venerable harper had good cause to mourn the departure of his benevolent chief, on whose death another arose, who saw no virtue in the arts. This was Roderick, the seventeenth chief, by whom "Dunvegan Castle was neglected, and the services of bard, harper, and piper were dispensed with to make room for grooms, gamekeepers, factors, dogs, and the various etceteras of a fashionable English establishment." Nor need we wonder that the sudden reversal of conditions should have wounded the feelings of those who valued the native culture; and the harper-bard thus deplores it, contrasting the changed ways with the hospitable days of old:

> "Tha mactalla fo ghruaim
> Anns an talla 'm biodh fuaim a' cheòil:
> 'S ionad tathaich nan cliar
> Gun aighear, gun mhiadh, gun phòit,
> Gun mhire, gun mhùirn,
> Gun iomrachadh dlùth nan còrn,
> Gun phailteas ri daimh,
> Gun mhacnus, gun mhanran beòil."

The bards have nothing to record in praise of this chief. To them he was "crionach gun duilleach" (a decayed tree without fruit or foliage). The traditions of his race, and its culture, were alike insipid and uninspiring to him, for his artificial mind assiduously aped the manners of the South.

No event of importance happened during his regime, which lasted six years. He was married to Lady Isabel Mackenzie, the daughter of the third Earl of Seaforth, and his family consisted of an only daughter, named Anne, who was married to the notable warrior, Donald MacLeod of Bernera, better known by the agnomen of "The Old Trojan." The chief died in the last year of the century, and, as he had no male issue, the succession devolved on his brother, Norman. Since the period of the chiefship of the latter falls in the subsequent century, we shall meantime defer its narration in order to bring the story of the MacDonalds to date.

SIR DONALD MACDONALD, THIRD BARONET OF SLEAT.

We remember that the affairs of this clan were in a perplexing state during the latter days of the chief, Sir James, owing to domestic dissensions between him and his heir, and that the discord was occasioned by the financial difficulties in which they were embroiled. We have seen that the wadsetters threatened the deposition of the chief, and the exclusion of the heir from the succession; but an unpleasant situation was averted by the sudden death of Sir James, in 1678. His oldest son, Donald, succeeded to the estates. It seems, from a reference made to the latter by the bard, Iain Lom, that, like many another of that age, his face was disfigured by the marks of smallpox.

> " Og mhisneachail treun thu,
> 'S blàth na brio ort 'san eudann,
> Mur misd thu ro mheud 's tha do nàir' innt'."

Sir Donald had never been in robust health, and for many years after his accession he was constrained to lead a very quiet life; but he was unwearied in his endeavour to raise the low fortunes of his clan. Like his father, and especially his grandfather, he was an ardent Loyalist. This was seen, as on other occasions, when the Duke of Argyle was in rebellion against King James in 1685. Sir Donald was asked by the Privy Council to raise his men, and, with about 300 of his clan, he marched to the head of Loch Ness, where he joined the other Highland chiefs, who had mustered in force in opposition to MacCailean Mór of Argyle.

And again, in 1689, when the Highland chiefs rose on behalf of King James, under Viscount Dundee, Sir Donald was not lagging in his support of the Stuarts. In the MacDonald charter-chest is a letter, sent by Dundee to Sir Donald, who was enjoined to forward it to Iain Breac MacLeod of Dunvegan, beseeching the latter to be in Lochaber by the 10th of June, 1689, and adding: "I am persuaded that Sir Donald of Sleat will be there by this time." In that surmise Dundee was not mistaken, for Sir Donald was there, and with 500 of his clansmen. He did not, however, remain long with Dundee, for, on account of the impaired state of his health, he was not then fit for rough campaigning, and so was compelled to return home. The command of the clan he deputed to his gallant son, Donald, afterwards the famous warrior known to history as "Do'ull a Chogaidh," or "Donald of the War."

From Lochaber, Dundee set off for Blair Castle. He had only 2500 men, and they could hardly be said to be disciplined. Against him was sent a royalist force 4000 strong, under the command of a brave and magnanimous Highlander, Mackay of Scourie. The latter marched north from Dunkeld to attack Dundee at Blair Athol, but, on the way, in the wild gorge of Killiecrankie, or Raon Ruairi, he was beset by the Highland army. It was a gloomy morning that succeeded a night of rain when Dundee's men saw Mackay's troops winding their way by the swollen waters of the Garry. The MacDonalds were placed by Dundee on the extreme left of his army, where they were opposed to the best of King William's men. There were no cavillings about posts of honour that morning, as, with a yell far louder than the roar of the turbulent torrent of the Garry, the clansmen dashed to the onset. Though met by a disciplined phalanx, the charge of the Highlanders was that day irresistible, and the opposing forces were swept clean off the field in less than fifteen minutes.

But the Highlanders, and especially the Skye men, paid a heavy price for their glorious victory. Many of the leading men of the House of Sleat were left on the field—

"Air Raon Ruairidh nan stràc,
Far 'na bhuannaich thu blàr,
Chaill thu t'uaislean, 's t'armuinn ghleusda,"

Iain Lom sings in his lament on the death of Sir Donald.

After Killiecrankie, the Highland army was leaderless, for Cannon and Buchan were both incompetent; and although there were men of commanding personality among the Highland chiefs, the difficulty was that few of them were disposed to serve under one of their own order. That spirit of independence inevitably induced disintegration, and young Donald and his men went home to Skye. With them went General Buchan and the Earl of Seaforth, but they did not remain there long. A new force was raised, about 1500 strong, and it made for the east. But its campaign was cut short when it was defeated by Sir Thomas Livingston at the battle of Cromdale.

The broken force repaired to Skye, where it was joined by General Cannon. He remained there for about nine months; but he did little during that time for the cause of the Stuarts, being mainly concerned in negotiations with the king for the purpose of securing advantageous terms for himself. In that he succeeded, and he slunk away from Skye in a French trading-vessel to join the exiled James at St. Germains.

Meanwhile, what of the affairs of Sir Donald? The ever-chivalrous MacKay did all that was possible to persuade him to make his peace with King William; but the indomitable old warrior treated those friendly overtures with scorn. His answer was that nothing would ever induce him to recognise William as his king. It is small wonder, then, that sentence of forfeiture was passed on the estates of the family in the month of June, 1690, and that two frigates were despatched by the government to Skye in order to intimidate the chief from pursuing the paths of treason.

The government vessels were commanded by Captains Porringer and Douglas, and strict injunctions were given to these officers to have recourse to force only when they found that all the possible avenues to conciliation were barred against them. Numerous messages were sent by Captain Porringer to Sir Donald, but their effect on the chief was nugatory. Nothing then remained to the emissaries of the government but to use force. A party was accordingly landed at Creag a' Chaim, in Armadale, and an attack was made on Sir Donald's residence. On the approach of the invaders, the garrison took to the hills, but seeing their chief's mansion and one of his galleys aflame, the natives returned, and fell on the Southerners with such determination that they overcame them and scattered them in all directions.

One section of the landing party made for the north, and succeeded in gaining Castle Camus in Knock, which was then unoccupied. There, owing to their advantageous position, they put up an effective resistance for a time; but they were finally forced to surrender. Tripods were made of oars, and to these rude gallows the whole band was strung by the enraged islanders.

Another section of the party was pursued along the shore to the south, until it made a stand on Dun Flò, a mound on the shore in front of the lodge of Tormore. Here twenty-six of them took refuge in a cleft, the approach to which was so well guarded by a powerful Royalist with his sword, that for some considerable time he was able to maintain a clear area in front of him. According to the local tradition, one of his assailants at length clambered up the mound on the shore-side, and, with an axe fixed to the end of a fishing-rod, swung a blow at the gladiator from above, and mortally wounded him. On the death of their leader, the party yielded, and they suffered a fate similar to that of their comrades who had betaken themselves to Castle Camus. The Rev. Martin MacPherson, who wrote "The Old Statistical Account" for the parish of Sleat, about one hundred years after the incident, states that twenty-six of the invaders were buried on the top of Dun Flò.

This episode served but to stiffen Sir Donald's resistance, and he treated with contempt all the efforts of the government to effect his reconciliation. Indeed, one cannot but marvel at the forbearance of William in his attitude towards his unruly subject, and especially so when, in 1691, four French ships-of-war arrived in Skye with arms and ammunition, in order to support a new rising. This project came to nothing, however; for the dour Jacobite, with unaccountable suddenness, took advantage of the amnesty that was to be extended to the Highland chiefs who offered their allegiance to King William before the end of the year. He thus perhaps escaped the fate of his kinsmen of Glencoe.

From this time onwards, Sir Donald was a loyal subject of King William, if one may judge from the correspondence that so frequently passed between him and Colonel Hill of Inverness, who was the king's representative in the Highlands. The remainder of his life was uneventful, and this chief of outstanding wisdom and fortitude, according to the bards, died at Armadale on the 5th of February, 1695, and was buried in Kilmore.

The poet Iain Lom, who wrote so much about the contemporary chiefs of Clan Donald, has immortalised the name of Sir Donald in a "cumha," or "lament," he composed on the occasion of his death. He characterises him as:

> "Leomhann fhireachail, àigh,
> Muinnte, spioradail, àrd,
> Umhail, iriosal, feardha, treubhach.
>
> Léigh nan arm, is nan each,
> Reumail, aireil, gun airc,
> Dh'eug thu 'n Armadal ghlas nan déideag."

Sir Donald was married to Margaret Douglas, daughter of the Earl of Morton; and three of their sons are known to fame, namely, Donald, the heir; James of Oransay, who also was chief; and William, who was killed on Sheriffmuir.

This takes the political history of the island to the end of the seventeenth century, and we shall now treat of the social conditions that appertain to that time.

CHAPTER X

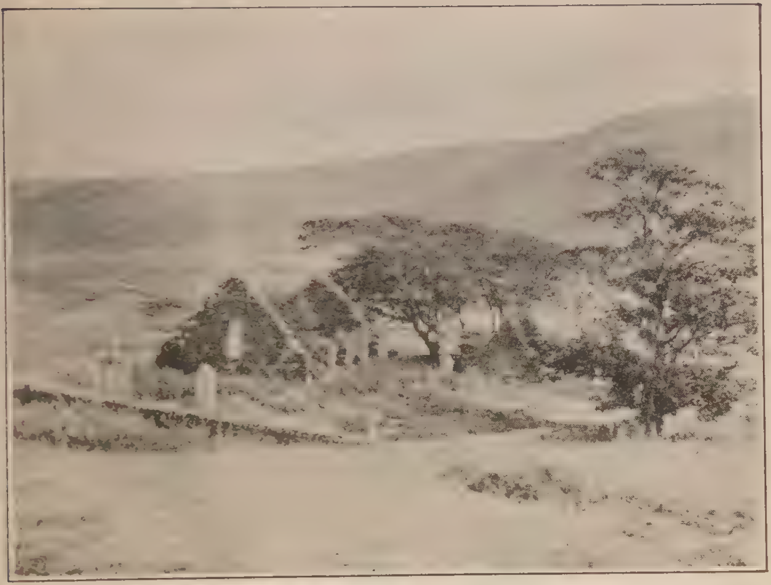
SOCIAL CONDITIONS, 1650-1700.

The Church.

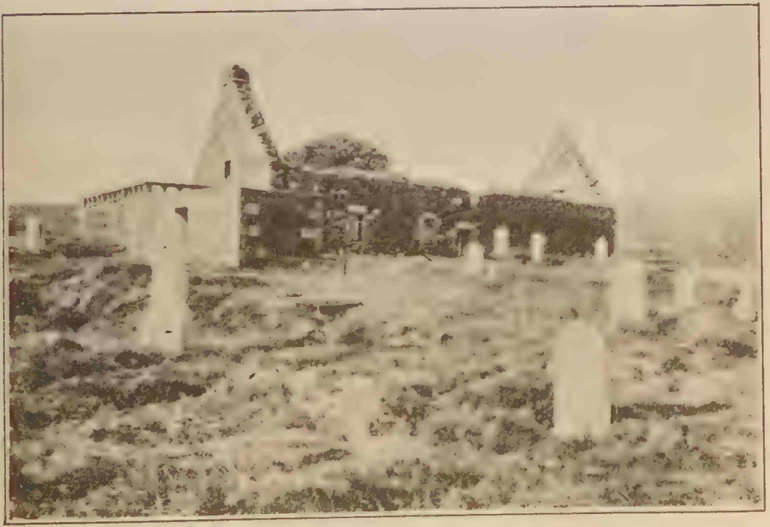
THERE was then, and for many generations after that, much superstition rampant in Skye. Yet the preaching of the true religion was by no means neglected, for there were many zealous members of the clergy in the island during the latter half of the seventeenth century.

We have seen that the Rev. Neil Mackinnon was minister of Sleat, to which he was translated in 1641 from the district of Strath, where he had ministered previously for seventeen years. His successor in Strath was the Rev. Farquhar MacLennan, a native of Lochbroom, who continued there until 1675. In that year the Rev. Donald Mackinnon, a son of Rev. Neil, and a graduate in Arts of the University of Glasgow, was presented to Strath by Charles II. He was succeeded in 1696 by the Rev. Martin MacPherson, M.A., who held this charge until 1712, when he died at the early age of 40 years. This noted scholar is described as "a mild, good-natured, and well-bred gentleman." He was the grandson of Rev. Martin MacPherson, who was minister of Duirinish until his death in 1661.

This latter clergyman had a romantic career. He had been forced to relinquish his charge in South Uist; and, having fled to Skye under threat of assassination, he was taken under the protection of Iain Breac MacLeod, and nominated to the parish of Duirinish by that famous chief. All his property in Uist was confiscated, and he thus sustained great loss. As a result of the damage he suffered, the Captain of Clan Ranald was excommunicated by the Church, and it was ordained by parliament that the injured clergyman should be reimbursed to the extent of £150 out of the "vacant stipends" in his own and adjoining parishes; but the Rev. Martin waived his claim, in spite of the promptings of his brethren to take advantage of it.



EYNORT (MINGINISH).



KILCHRIST.

He was succeeded by his son, Dugald, a graduate in Arts of Glasgow, who was admitted to this charge before 1689, and who died in 1717, at the age of 76 years. He is said to have "strenuously opposed popery. He possessed a fine poetical vein, and was exemplary in the discharge of his duties." Of his large family, the most noted were the Rev. Martin MacPherson, who was minister of Sleat and Strath, and John, who was one of the most outstanding schoolmasters in Skye in his age. The latter conducted a school in Orbost, and was a famous student of the classics.

The large parish of Snizort was served by the Rev. Archibald MacQueen, M.A., of the University of Glasgow, at which he graduated in 1636. In the year 1656 he was deposed by the Synod for his grievous breach of discipline in marrying the Captain of Clan Ranald, who had been excommunicated for the injuries he had inflicted on the Rev. Martin MacPherson, the minister of Duirinish.

The Rev. Archibald was succeeded by Rev. George Monro, who died within a year of his appointment, and the expelled minister was reinstated. He retired, however, in 1658, and was succeeded by his son, Rev. Donald MacQueen, M.A., of Edinburgh. This incumbent was deprived of his charge for non-jurancy, but is said to have continued in possession until 1710.

In the parish of Kilmuir, the Rev. Donald Nicolson, who was also chief of the family of Nicolson of Scorrybreck, was the minister from about 1663 until 1696, when, on account of his zeal for Episcopalianism, he relinquished his charge rather than conform to Presbyterianism. He died in the following year.

His son, Alexander, was Episcopalian minister at Stenschol, where he intruded in 1715. He was the last of the line of ministers who, after the Restoration, had been established in Skye by Charles II.

The Rev. John Mackinnon was admitted to Bracadale in 1632, and he continued there until 1662, when he was succeeded by Rev. Lachlan Fraser, who gave place to Rev. John Bethune, M.A. The last was the oldest son of the famous physician, Angus Bethune, and is described as "a learned divine, and an able physician." He is said to have been the first minister in the island to have dispensed the sacrament according to the rites of the Presbyterian

Church. He was married to Marion MacLeod of Drynoch, and one of his sons, Kenneth, was minister of the parish of Kilmuir.

The Rev. Angus MacQueen is mentioned in the records of the Synod of Argyle as minister of Sleat as early as 1653. He was an accomplished scholar, showing special talents in his mastery of Gaelic. In the year 1694, it was ordained that he be deprived of his charge, probably because he was a non-juror; but it seems he continued there until the year 1709.

Before the Restoration, Presbyterianism had been instituted, and Skye was joined to the Synod of Argyle. When that council was engaged, in 1653, in the translation of the Shorter Catechism into Gaelic, two representatives of the clergy of Skye paid a visit to the conference of their Argyleshire brethren, who met in Inveraray. They were Rev. Angus MacQueen of Sleat and Rev. John MacKinnon of Bracadale. They were heartily welcomed, and each of them submitted Gaelic translations of the Catechism they had rendered independently. The quality of the work presented by the Skyemen so impressed the men of Argyle, that the latter unanimously resolved to make use of their versions in the effort to evolve a true and worthy translation. The work of John MacKinnon was especially commended, both on account of its faithfulness to the original and for its terse, idiomatic constructions, "for he is a man able in that language."

The approved version of the Catechism in Gaelic appeared in 1656, and a strong recommendation was made to the people to commit it to memory. In order to effect this, it was proposed that schoolmasters should teach the Catechism to their pupils, and that as soon as the latter had acquired a reasonable proficiency in the reading of it, they were to go from house to house and teach those of their neighbours who could not themselves read the Catechism in Gaelic.

It is not known how far this commendable project was pursued, but there is no reason to believe that it was permitted to fall into abeyance through neglect. The clergy of Skye in these days were earnest men, who carried out their duties with faithfulness, and often in face of great privations. Many of them suffered even from the want of the bare necessaries of life. The Synod of Argyle, already referred to in connection with the translation of the Shorter Catechism, were so impressed by the indigence of the worthy cleric of Skye, Rev. John MacKinnon of Bracadale, that they decided to confer on him "twelve bolls of victual out of the vacant parishes of Kintyre," in order to relieve his immediate wants. These men did not, however, labour in vain. In a poem by Iain Lom, called "A Bhean Leasaich an Stòp Dhuinn," in praise of Sir James MacDonald of Sleat, we find the following significant verse:

> " 'Nuair bu sgìth de luchd theud e,
> Gheibhte Biobull 'ga leughadh
> Le fìor chreidheamh, is céille,
> Mar a dh' òrduich Mac Dhe dhuibh;
> 'S gheibhte teagasg na cléir uaith le sìth";

and the same author shows that those in authority were not neglectful of the affairs of the Church when, in his "Cumha," or lament for Sir Donald, the successor of Sir James MacDonald, he says:

> " Eaglais Shléibhte nan stuadh,
> Chosg thù féin ri cur suas,
> Ged nach d' fhuirich thu buan ri sgleutadh."

The church of Kilmore referred to here was erected in 1681, and Sir Donald died in 1695. About the same time a new church, the successor of the ancient church of St. Columba at Skeabost, was built at Loch Snizort Beag.

Immediately after the Restoration in 1660, efforts were made to re-establish Episcopacy in the island; and that a large measure of success attended the king's endeavours in this direction is indicated by an asseveration by the Rev. Donald Nicolson, minister of Kilmuir, to the Privy Council in 1666, to the effect that there were only six Non-conformists in the whole of Skye at that time. In 1662 the parishes of Sleat and Strath, then conjoined, were assigned by the king to the Archdeacon of the Isles, as one of his "proper kirkes"; and at the same time the churches of Snizort and of "Lendell" (Lyndale) were conferred on that cleric also. The latter church was probably the chapel mentioned then as situated at "Kildoren" (now Kildonan) in Lyndale.

On the accession of William and Mary, it appears that the majority of the clergy of Skye took the oath of allegiance to the new rulers. When the extrusion of the non-jurors took place in 1689, we have record of only two of the ministers of Skye who were threatened with deprivation. These were Rev. Donald Nicolson of Kilmuir and the Rev. Angus MacQueen of Sleat; and even they were allowed to continue in the enjoyment of their livings for a considerable time.

The Church itself was held in high veneration by the people; and so prevalent was this feeling that, in many cases, as the congregation approached the building, they might be seen kneeling down at various points on the way and offering prayers. The sacred edifice impressed them with profound devotion, and it actuated them with becoming decorum, so that, no matter what their conduct might have been during the week, their minds sensed something of spiritual moment at least when they were inside the church.

That they were capable of lofty ideals there can be no doubt; and if, as has been suggested, that wonderful prayer in verse, called "Beannachadh Beothaidh," or "Blessing the Kindling" (of the fire), belongs to this period, we have, in essence, the aspirations of our race. True, "Beannachadh Beothaidh" shows internal evidence of its having been composed by a Catholic, perhaps of the Outer Hebrides; but we may take it as expressive of the moral ideals that prevailed in Skye at that time as well. It is as follows, and there is perhaps nothing in the Beatitudes to transcend its ethos:

" Dhé fadaidh thusa am chridhe steach
Aiteal gràidh dom' choimhearsnach;
Dom' nàmh, dom' dhaimh, dom' charaide,
Do'n t-saoi, do'n daoi, do'n tràille;
O Mhic na Muire minghile,
Bho 'n ni is isle crannachaire,
Gu ruig an t-ainm is àirde."

Their most ardent wish in life was that, in death, they might find a last resting-place within the precincts of the church, with the result that, at this time, numerous burials were carried out even in its floor. The graves were dug dangerously shallow, so that the stench was noisome, and often overpowering. Bones and skulls sometimes littered the floor, and were placed in niches in the walls, in order that the worshippers might be constantly reminded of their latter end.

EDUCATION.

Although the inhabitants of Skye, during the latter portion of the seventeenth century, might fail to approach the standards in education that we moderns attain to, there is no warrant to conclude that they were a whit behind us in real culture. They were imbued with a passionate love for poetry, and no one occupied so high a place in their minds as the bard. He possessed privileges that none other could hope to enjoy, for he comported himself as freely in the presence of the chief himself as he did in that of the lowest vassal.

At the "ceilidhs," the practice of composing improptu verse was extremely popular, and all present were expected to make their contribution to this form of intellectual entertainment. The story-teller, too, was held in high estimation, and the ancient tales, and the poetry of the Feinne, were told and retold to eager listeners. Nor were these pastimes despised in the homes of the great, for our bards make frequent reference to the institution, especially in:

> "Dunbheagain nan steud,
> 'Sam faighear luchd theud,
> Bheir greis air gach sgeul
> Buaidh-ghlòrach,"

as Màiri ni'n Alasdair Ruaidh has it; and according to the same authority:

> "Gu'm bu chleachdadh 'na dhéidh sin
> Greis air ursgeul na Feinne."

Competitions were eagerly entered into for the purpose of ascertaining the individual in the company who was capable of quoting the largest number of proverbs. This was done by a process of elimination. Each contestant was expected to repeat a proverb that had not been mentioned in the course of the evening; and if one failed, that person was debarred from farther participation in the game, which went on until there was only one survivor. Such an exercise, entailing the constant enunciation of the concentrated wisdom of the past, was bound to have had an enormous influence on the morals and the intelligence of the race. Riddles, also, were propounded in the same fashion, with the incidental effect of stimulating the powers of observation and whetting the intellect.

They had a wide knowledge of field botany, and took great pride in their ability to name the plants of the countryside. And this learning had for them a practical bearing, in that it helped them to know those herbs that possessed medicinal or dyeing properties.

They had skilled musicians, acknowledged masters of the harp and of the pipes, and they were able to appreciate the best that these matchless musicians could give; so that, on the whole, the sum of their culture must have been a notable quantity.

And they did not neglect to pay attention to the advancement of education. Tacksmen, and others who could afford it, had formed themselves into organisations in order to employ teachers to educate their children. They were often able to secure the services of men of outstanding ability for this purpose, with the result that such a love of the classics was then inculcated and maintained during the following century, that the name of Skye was honoured wherever such culture was appreciated.

The most noted schoolmaster of that time in the island was John MacPherson, the son of Rev. Dugald MacPherson, minister of Diurinish. He conducted a school in Orbost, where many a pupil got the benefit of his profound knowledge of Latin and Greek. At that time a noted student of the Classics, and a man of outstanding talents, was Martin Martin, who was tutor to the family of Iain Breac, the Chief of Dunvegan.

RECREATIONS.

During the latter part of the seventeenth century the art of music was widely cultivated, and generously patronised, in Skye. We know that Iain Breac MacLeod maintained a piper, a fiddler, and a harper in his establishment; and numerous references are made by contemporary poets to the inspiring artistry of these instrumentalists. Màiri ni'n Alasdair Ruaidh sings of—

"Piob nuallanach mhòr,
Bheir buaidh air gach ceòl,"

and "Gàirich nam pìob, 's nan clàrsach a rìs," while Roderick Morrison, the blind harper and bard, makes mention of the pipe, the harp, and the fiddle as being daily played in Dunvegan in his own time; and to each he pays a tribute, which, for graphic description of the instruments and their music, has never been equalled in our poetry. Of the bagpipes, he says:

"'Nam éirigh gu moch
Anns an teaghlach gun sproc, gun ghruaim,
Chluinnte gleadhraich nan dos,
'S an céile 'na cois bho'n t-suain;
'Nuair a ghabhadh i làn,
'S i gu'n cuireadh os 'n aird na fhuair,
Le meoir fhileanta bhinn
'S iad gu ruith-leumach, dianach, luath."

His genius finds expression no less happily in his account of his own instrument, the harp:

"'Nuair a chuirt i 'na tàmh (i.e., the bagpipes)
Le furtachd na fàrdaich féin,
Dhòmhsa b' fhurasd' a ràdh
Gu'm bu chuireideach gàir nan teud;
Le iomairt da làmh
A cur binneas do chàch an céill,
'S gu' bu shiubhlach am chluais
'Moghunn lùghmhor le luasgan mheur."

In another stanza he mentions the fact that singers were accompanied by the music of the violin:

"Gheibhte fleasgaich gun ghràin
'Na d' thalla gun egràig, gun fhuath.
Mnai fhionna 'n fhuilt réidh,
Cur binneas an céill le fuaim;
Le ceilearadh beòil,
Bhiodh gu h-ealanta, òrdail, suaire,
Bhiodh fear bogha 'nan còir,
Ri cur meoghair a mheòir 'nan cluais."

We gather from a verse in the works of Mairi Nin Alasdair Ruaidh that the organ, or rather the spinet, was in use in Dunvegan at this time:

"Sliochd Ollaghair . . . . . .

. . . . . .

Nan còrn gormghlas
'S nan ceol òrghain."

Nor was music neglected at Duntulm, the seat of the MacDonalds of Skye; but, after a perusal of the works of Iain Lom, and of "An Ciaran Mabach," one concludes that the pipes held then a subordinate place there to the harp and the fiddle.

These recreations were varied by the telling of tales, the enunciation of proverbs, and the propounding of riddles. Their other indoor diversions did not differ materially from those that were practised in the early portion of the century. They consisted of games with backgammon, dice, cards, etc.; and of them "An Ciaran Mabach" says:

"'Nàm gluasad bho thir dhuinn,
Bu neo-mhiodhair ar lòistean;
Còrnach, cupanach, fionach,
Glaineach, liontaidh a stòpaibh;
Gu cairteach, taileasgach, dìsneach,
'S tailc air uigh nam fòirnibh;
Dhòmhsa b' fhurasd sud innseadh,
Bu chuid dom' ghniomh 'o m' aois òig e."

Their outdoor sports, too, had suffered no change—putting the stone, wrestling, leaping; and they were passionately fond of hunting:

"'S e bu mhiannach lem' leanabh
Bhi 'm beannaibh na seilge;
Gabhail aighear na frithe,
'S a direadh nan garbh-ghlac:
A' leigeil nan cuilean,
'S a furan nan seanna chon,
'S e bu dheireadh do'n fhiuran
Ud fuil thoirt a calgaibh,
O luchd nan céir geala,
'S nam falluinnean dearga."

Weapons.

The weapons in use were bows and arrows, dirks, swords, carbines, and fowling-pieces. In one of her songs, Mairi Nin Alasdair Ruaidh gives an interesting account of the arms in the "gun-room" of Sir Norman of Bernera:

"Gheibhte sud ann ad fhàrdaich,
An càradh air ealachainn,
Miosar, is adharc, is rogha gach armachd,
Agus lanntainean tana,
'O 'n ceanaibh gu 'm barra dheis;
Gheibhte sud air gach slios dhiubh,
Isneach, is cairbinn,
Agus iubhar chruaidh fhallain,
Le'n taifeidean cainbe.

"Agus iubhar chruaidh fhallain,
Le'n taifeidean cainbe,
Agus cuilbhearan caola,
Air an daoiread gu'n ceannaicht' iad.
Glac nan ceann liobhte,
Air chur sios ann am balgaibh,
'O iteach an fhìr-eoin,
'S o shioda nan gaillebheinn."

THE CHIEFS.

There is noticeable, towards the end of this period, a marked change in the attitude of the chiefs towards the clan. No longer satisfied with the old ways of life at home, they sought the cities of the south; and they often spent their means there in extravagance. We have seen this, especially, in the case of Sir James Mor, the Chief of the MacDonalds; and of Roderick, the son and successor of Iain Breac, the celebrated chief of the MacLeods.

In order to meet the increasing demands of an artificial mode of life, they began to exact higher rents from their peoples; but what pained the latter more than anything else was that they were no longer interested in the culture of their own race.

In spite of all this, the chief still continued to be revered by his clan, so strong was the bond that held them to him; and his wants were ungrudgingly supplied. He could act, if he chose, as the autocrat, for he had power of life and death over his clan. Invested with the privilege of heritable jurisdiction, he made a circuit of his estates, holding courts for the trial of those guilty of misdemeanour, and settling disputes. Near the ruin of Duntulm Castle is a round knoll called the "Hill of Pleas," where the Chief of the MacDonalds dispensed justice in that portion of Trotarnish; and there is a similar site in the vicinity of Ullinish House, which, as "Dr." Donald MacQueen informed Boswell, was known as "the Hill of Strife, for justice was of old administered there."

In their itinerary, the chiefs were accompanied by a large body of their cadets, and others of the principal members of the clan. They were still entitled to those privileges of Bonnacht and Coshering—tributes covered by the term, "cuid-oidhche" or "night-portion," referred to in a previous section, the former being an obligation to provide free lodging for the chief and his retinue, the latter an exaction for the victualling of the party.

Firm as was their loyalty to their chief, and genuine as was their reverence for his person, it was, however, always clear that his interests were subordinate to those of his clan whenever these should fail to harmonise. We have seen this in an acute form when domestic dissensions between Sir James Mor and his son, Donald, threatened trouble to the House of Sleat. Then the leaders of the clan met in conclave, and, in no uncertain voice, informed the disputants that, unless they composed their differences, the chief would be summarily deposed, and the heir would be prevented from the succession.

THE LAND.

Cultivation and Tenure.

We have seen, in the "Regulations for Chiefs" of 1616, that it was enacted, among other precepts, that the chiefs were to let any land they themselves could not cultivate, that they were to set up home-farms, and make "planting" about their houses, in order to add to the amenities of their estates.

Tacks.

Some difficulty was naturally experienced by the chiefs in collecting rents for the lands they had thus let, and they were accordingly led to dispose of large tracts of it on tack—*i.e.*, by a lease granted for a specified period. The tacks were often of large extent, the stock of one of average size being 40 cows, 40 followers, 36 horses, and about 120 sheep. The arable land of such a holding produced 70 bolls of barley, 20 of oats, and an equal quantity of rye.

The obligations imposed on the tacksman were:

(1) Grassum, which was a premium paid by the tenant to his superior on his entering on a lease; and, for a large holding, it might be as much as 300 merks, or its equivalent in cattle.

(2) Rental.—This usually took two forms, namely, that paid in kind, and made up of cattle, poultry, butter, cheese, fish, and blankets; and money rent, which was designated "tack-duty."

(3) The final obligation was the rendering of military service.

When Donald Gorm Mor of Sleat received a charter for his lands in 1596 from James VI, he was also given a "letter of tack" for Trotarnish.

WADSET.

The chief, or other superior, sometimes disposed of an extent of land to a tenant on mortgage, and such tenure was termed "wadset." The occupier of such a holding was obliged to pay the crown dues and the ecclesiastical duties that fell on his portion. He was at liberty to sub-let, or to sub-divide, his land; but he laboured under the disadvantage that his superior could displace him, or his sub-tenants, whenever the amount of the security could be paid.

This form of land tenure became very common in Skye when the chiefs sought the luxury of the cities, and were always in need of money. It appears to have been instituted under the regime of Sir James Mor of Sleat, and of Roderick MacLeod, the predecessor of Iain Breac. Then numerous wadsetters sprang up all at once on the island. They consisted of the principal men of the clan, and in many cases they held other lands on "tack," in addition to those that were leased to them on "wadset" by the chief. The wadsetters became so numerous in Skye during the eighteenth century, and held their lands so long, that it is difficult to distinguish them from the tacksmen. Among many similar contracts, there is extant a notice of the bestowal of a wadset of land in Bornaskitaig on Archibald MacDonald by his brother, the chief, Sir James Mor, in 1667.

The larger tenants sub-let portions of their holdings, and they assigned plots to workers in return for labour. The latter built houses on their land, while a souming of cattle and sheep was also allotted to them. The arable land of these sub-tenants was held on the runrig system, and was apportioned usually by lot. The principal crops that were grown consisted of barley, oats, rye, and flax.

An indication of the relative extent of the estates of the three great chiefs of Skye at the end of the seventeenth century is afforded by the amount of rental for each, being £7000 for MacLeod, £6200 for MacDonald, and £2400 for MacKinnon.

TRADE.

The selling of the black cattle of the island, begun by Do'ull MacIain 'ic Sheumais before 1650, was continued by him into the latter portion of the seventeenth century; and others, by his example, now took part in that profitable industry. So prosperous had this trade proved to be, that the higher ranks no longer considered it an indignity to engage in this and other pursuits. "Trade," says Fletcher of Saltoun, "is now become the golden ball for which all nations in the world are contending"; and as inter-clan warfare had then ceased, the men of Skye were not averse to participate in the benefits that accrued from this industry.

Fishing still continued to be profitable around our shores, and large quantities of herring and salmon were secured. The natives were now less disinclined to engage in it; but they were lacking in resource, so that the major portion of the gains went to the Lowland crews, and especially to the Dutchmen, who were on very friendly terms with the islanders. It has been said that, about the beginning of the following century, as many as 700 Dutch vessels were employed annually in fishing in Scotland. They had obtained an enormous advantage over the native fishers, in that they had introduced the method of barrelling the herring for transmission to the continental markets.

The wool of the native sheep was sold to manufacturers in the eastern counties of Scotland, and some of it was woven locally into a coarse woollen cloth called "plaiding," that was exported to Denmark, and to the Netherlands; but the trade in this commodity was never very active.

During the major portion of this period, there was a state of great disquiet in the Highlands, so that trade sustained a serious set-back. Skye suffered much because of the part many of the clansmen took in the campaigns of Montrose, of Charles II, and of Dundee; and we saw that Sir Donald of Sleat remained in opposition to the government until late in the year 1691. There were so many in arms all over the Highlands that robberies were rife, with the result that those who drove their cattle to the Lowland markets were often deprived of whole herds. It required men of the resolution and the prowess of Do'ull MacIain 'ic Sheumais to run the gauntlet of these marauders successfully.

In a letter written by Fraser of Beaufort to Iain Breac MacLeod of Dunvegan, in 1691, there is a statement to the effect that "the letter may not reach you owing to robbers"; while in another epistle, written to that chief also, this time by his oldest son and heir, Roderick, who was a student at the University of Edinburgh in 1690, it is stated that he could not enter college that year, for all the "masters" and professors were to be displaced; and "no man can lay his mind to his book for reason of the tumult and confusion."

INDUSTRY.

Some of the principal industries, such as agriculture, fishing, cattle-dealing, and the manufacture of cloth, have already been dealt with. There were mills in several districts, and people were ordered to send their grain to these places to be ground. In exchange for his labour, the miller received a modicum, consisting usually of one-thirteenth part of the meal produced; and it would appear that he exacted a toll from every householder, whether the grain was sent to him or not. This claim was called "multure"; and there is a distinct reference to it in a song. composed by Màiri ni'n Alasdair Ruaidh, to John, the son of Sir Norman of Bernera:

"Ged theid mi dom' leabaidh,
Chan e cadal is miannach leam,
Aig ro mheud na tuile,
'S mo mhuileann gun iarunn air:
Tha *mholltair* ri pàigheadh,
Mur cailltir am bliadhna mi,
'S gur feumail dhomh faighinn,
Ge do ghabhainn an iasad i."

Private milling had been prohibited by a law passed in the year 1284; and by it the miller was empowered to seize and break all the querns in his district; but it is improbable that this regulation was enforced with any show of rigour in the islands, and we know that in Skye there were querns in most households then, and grinding was a daily exercise.

There were three methods of preparing the grain for the milling. These were:

(1) Ealachaidh, in which the corn was parched in a kiln;

(2) Earraraidh, when it was slowly parched in a pot over the fire before grinding; and

(3) Gradaning, in which sheaves of corn were, in turn, held over a flame, and the ears were separated from the straw and partially parched before the grinding.

The meal produced by the last operation was considered to possess greater palatability than that yielded by either of the other processes; and the details of its production are as follows:—Splints of burning wood were held under a sheaf of corn, and the ears thus separated were allowed to fall on a piece of cloth, or a dried skin. The corn was then winnowed, parched in a pot, ground with the quern, and winnowed again, to produce the meal. It is said that the whole operation, including the baking of the bread, could be accomplished in the space of one hour. The work of gradaning corn was carried on, as we shall see later, far into the succeeding century.

The three methods of preparing the corn are referred to in a stanza of an old poem:

"Ma 's ealachaidh a th'agad, no gradan,
Ma 's earraraidh e, thoir dhomh màm;
'S ma's acras, gu'r manadh 'ga chasgadh,
Fìdeagann blasda mhin bhàin."

In grinding, two elliptical slabs of stone were used, the convex face of the upper stone fitting into the concave surface of the lower one. Two persons generally attended to the grinding, one feeding the quern and the other rotating the upper stone. It was, of course, held to be beneath the dignity of a man to engage in this work, as in many another form of manual labour, and the old hunter-bard of Lochaber, Do'ull MacFhilidh nan Dàn, pointedly adverts to this prejudice in his wonderful poem, "A' Chomhachag":

"B'annsa leam na dùrdail bodaich
Os cionn lic ag earraraidh sìl,
Bùirean an daimh am bi ghne dhuinead
Air leacan beinne 's e ri sìn'."

The work of grinding was accompanied, as were most forms of labour, by an appropriate song. "The island lassies," says Pennant, speaking of his tour through Skye in 1770, "the island lassies, as in the days of Aristophanes 'warbled as they ground their parched corn.'" We have numerous examples of this type of "labour"-song, and the following is given, as its rhythm so well illustrates the movement of the quern; and it shows the prevalence of superstitious beliefs among the people of that time:

"Cuir 'n car deiseil am feasda de'n bhràth,
Ma 's math leat min bhàn bhi torrach dhut,
Mu'n cuairt i na stìll, le luinneagan binn,
'S cha toirear do'n t-sìthean deannal dhi."

Quern stones were usually made of the gneiss of the mainland, the district of Lochaber being long noted for their manufacture; and they cost then about 14/- per set. The production of these, later to become such an important industry there, had not yet begun in the island of Raasay.

DIET.

The food of the people does not seem to have changed to any appreciable extent during this century, though the steak of seal, and of the stranded whale, was sometimes added to the menu. The poor had little in late winter and spring beyond bread and brochan or skilly; but on that scanty fare they were able to toil all day. Their powers of endurance were marvellous, aided, it must be said, by a magnificent fund of fortitude. One has only to refer to the campaigns of Montrose in illustration of this characteristic, when long distances were covered in such a short time as to excite the surprise and the admiration of all who ever heard of their exploits; and yet these hardy warriors had often to subsist, for days together, on nothing else save a little oatmeal mixed in cold water.

There is extant a very interesting account of the people of the Western Isles, written by a certain William Sacheverell, who, in 1688, had been commissioned to salve the "Florida," the flagship of the Armada, which had been sunk 100 years previously in the harbour of Tobermory. Of the people, he says: "They appear in all their actions to have a certain air of freedom and contempt of those trifles, luxury, and ambition which we so servilely creep after. They bind their appetites by their necessities, and their happiness consists, not in having much, but in coveting little."

Yet in that same year the people of Skye were in sore straits. Owing to the fact that very little food was imported, terrible privations were endured when, from climatic or other causes, the staple crops failed. The Rev. William Martin, who wrote the

"Old Statistical Account" for Kilmuir, makes mention of that memorable year as follows: "In 1688 the seasons were so eminently unfavourable, and corn was so deficient in quantity and quality, that the poor actually perished on the highways for want of aliment." Such contingencies were of frequent occurrence in those days.

The people were less intemperate during the latter portion of the seventeenth century than they had been during its earlier part. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that not one-third of the amount of wine consumed previously was now used; but it is noteworthy that other liquors had made their appearance; whisky, brandy, and ale being introduced about 1650. The bards refer to these intoxicants then for the first time. In his poem, "B'annsa Cadal air Fraoch," Archibald MacDonald, "An Ciaran Mabach," sings thus of the red deer, incidentally mentioning whisky and ale:

> " B'e mo ghràdhsa fear buidhe,
> Nach dean suidhe mu'n bhòrd;
> Nach iarradh ri cheannach
> Pinnt leanna no beòir;
> Uisge beatha math dùbailt
> Cha b'e b' fhiu leat ri òl;
> B' fhearr leat biolair an fhuarain,
> 'S uisge luaineach nan lòn";

while Iain Lom, in a lament written on the death of Sir James MacDonald, the brother of "An Ciaran Mabach," in 1678, describes the entertainments that were wont to be held in the Castle of Duntulm during the life-time of the dead chief:

> " Bhiodh do ghillean mu seach
> 'Lionadh dibhe b' fhearr blas
> Fion Spàinteach dearg ac', agus beòir;
> Uisge beatha nam pios,
> Rachadh 'n t' airgiod ga dhiol,
> Gheibhte 'n glain' e mar ghriog de'n òr."

Most of the whisky was brewed locally from the surplus grain, and all partook of it, in order, as they thought, to counteract the baleful influence of the moist climate on their constitution; but the inordinate indulgences that were so marked a feature of the early part of the century were now almost unknown.

They had a craving for snuff, and would work contentedly in the hope of getting a pinch of that stimulant at the end of the day. In the works of the bard, Iain Lom, we find a reference to this also, as:

> "'S ann leam nach bu chruaidh an ghaoir ud
> Bh' aig mnaibh galach nam falt sgaoilteach,
> Bhi 'gan tarruinn mar bheul snaoisean,
> Sealg nam boc, mu dhos nam maoilseach."

MANNER OF LIVING.

The homes of the people consisted of rude hovels, some constructed of dry stone with very thick walls, others had walls made of earth. The former were thatched with the straw of oats, of barley, or of rye, which was used in the spring as manure for the fields; the latter were often covered only with divots, and, as the grassy side was outermost, the whole structure soon assumed the appearance of a mound of green earth. The dwelling-houses of the more prosperous tacksmen were constructed of stone and lime, and were partitioned into rooms, in many instances by means of thick stone walls; but the vast majority had no divisions whatsoever.

Some of the cattle were housed during the winter months under the same roof as their owners, even in the more pretentious houses, and the poultry were freely admitted all the year round.

During the day the house was lit by the door, the smoke hole, and, in warm weather, by a slit in the wall that did duty for a window. The last was closed by clods of earth, or a bag of straw, when weather conditions were unfavourable. At night the partitionless interior was lighted by the fire that was placed in the middle of the floor, helped sometimes by the smoky and foul-smelling cruisie, with its bath of oil prepared from the seal, the whale, or fish offal, and its wick of the pith of the bullrush.

In the homes of the chiefs, and the more affluent tacksmen, candles were in use in Skye, a fact illustrated by a reference to them in the lament by Iain Lom on the death of Sir James MacDonald of Sleat, in 1678:

> "Coinnlean geala de'n chéir,
> 'S iad a' lasadh gu geur,
> Urlar farsuinn mu'n eight' an t-òl."

During the day the women were engaged in the industries of digging, harrowing, and reaping, in their season; and at night they were busy in the home, grinding, spinning, and weaving. For them there was no time for leisure. The woman is still the slave of the tribe, always employed on the heaviest and the most irksome toil. The men folk are comparatively idle, for labour in the field was still dishonourable to men with pretensions; and the only occupation in which they would deign to take part was the rearing of cattle.

The people were hospitable to a fault, and they would give the best they could afford to the stranger, no matter what his station might be; for after his circumstances they never enquired, and they considered it an honour to entertain him. Despite the advantage that was so frequently taken of this noble characteristic, they never grew weary of providing for the wayfarer; and, on his departure, they supplied him with stock of necessaries for his journey. We need not wonder at the fact that, as a result of this spirit of kindliness, homeless vagabonds and worthless idlers continued to prey upon them. Hence we find that, at the beginning of his chiefship, Sir Donald of Sleat granted a commission to the Chief of the MacKinnons in 1679, enjoining him to bring to justice all "sorners" in the district of Strath.

There were then, of course, no institutions for those who were incapacitated by age, by physical infirmity, or mental deficiency, from providing for themselves. Still, these unfortunates never lacked the necessaries of life, and, no matter how cantankerous their nature might be, they were never turned away from the door at which they called for food and shelter.

On account of the primitive conditions of sanitation that then prevailed, epidemics took a terrible toll of life. The ravages of such diseases as smallpox and fevers, were truly appalling, and were responsible for the fact that the population did not appreciably increase on the cessation of the clan wars at the beginning of this century.

Although they had physicians like the Beatons and the MacLeans, skilful practitioners in their day and generation, most of the people were their own pathologists; and superstitious cures were believed to have far greater potency than the most carefully prepared remedies. An incantation muttered over the sufferer, a special flower carried on the person, the movements, sunwise or the opposite, of a vessel placed on the surface of a sacred well, were firmly held to possess properties that could counteract the most diverse ailments; and who can say but that their faith had sometimes made them whole!

MARRIAGE CUSTOMS.

Although some contracts were still carried out, according to the ancient custom of "handfasting," the institution of marriage was then in a large measure under the auspices of the Church. When a young man desired a woman's hand, he went to her home with a few of his friends, among whom his father took a prominent part. The company stood in the doorway, where the oldest of them intimated that they had come to ascertain if one of the daughters of the house, who was, of course, mentioned by name, would marry him who had come in quest of a wife. If her people consented, the party was invited to enter; and, after they had partaken of refreshments, they departed. This stage in the preparation for the nuptials was called "An Còrdadh Beag," or "The Little Agreement."

A fortnight or so, thereafter, a more important ceremony took place. This was "An Reiteach Mor," or "The Great Contract," when, after much discussion, such matters as the amount of the dowry, and the date of the wedding day, were fixed. Great care was exercised in the choice of the latter, for no day of the week was considered to be auspicious except Tuesday or Thursday, and no time except a period of waxing moon.

About a week before the nuptials were to be celebrated, the young couple perambulated the district together. inviting their neighbours to the marriage feast. All those who attended the wedding brought presents in kind, and only of such articles as might be of use at the function. The duration of the ceremony was determined by the amount of the commissariat that had been collected, so that, as a rule, it lasted for a few days, and on occasion even as long as a week. Much healthy fun was then indulged in. At night, songs of interminable length were sung, accompanied by the sweet notes of the harp; while the exhilarating strains of the pibroch roused even the most lethargic to take part in the dance. During the day the young men vied with one another in athletic feats; but on that occasion it was obvious that their aim was to display their prowess rather than to exercise the body.

On the conclusion of the entertainment, a procession was formed, and the bridal party conveyed to their new home. This used to be a picturesque spectacle, as men and women, in couples. swung along the road, arm in arm, to the accompaniment of a chorus of songs, or the playing of pipes. On their arrival at their destination, the concluding item in the round of ceremonies was performed. The oldest member of the party, who was deputed to receive the young bride, broke a bannock over her head just as she stepped across the threshold. She entered, and immediately a boisterous scrimmage ensued to secure a piece of the lucky bread.

These marriage customs were upheld for many generations after the period with which we are now dealing, and a few of them cannot be said to have fallen into desuetude, even in our own day.

In accordance with his rights as superior, the chief demanded a fine from the father of the bride. The exaction then was in kind, consisting of some animal, such as a horse, cow, or sheep. But later it took the form of money, the amount of which depended on the station of the young wife.

Death Customs.

When a death took place in a district, all work was suspended until after the interment, as a mark of respect for the deceased. If there was any food that was immediately perishable in the house in which the corpse lay, a piece of iron was inserted in the substance, as otherwise they believed it would degenerate synchronously with the corruption of the dead body. All the fires were extinguished, and were not rekindled until the burial took place. The body was placed on deal boards, with two vessels on its chest, one containing earth and the other salt—symbols of the mortal body and the imperishable soul.

Neighbours watched the body by turns, and their duty was called a "Wake." Much food and drink were then consumed, so that it often happened that the relatives of the dead person were impoverished for years as a result of the drain on their resources.

The bard, too, officiated there, when he recited his song of praise, the "Moladh Mairbh," for which he never failed to get a substantial reward.

On the day of interment, which was never a Friday, the body was carried to the churchyard in solemn procession, and women followed the cortege wailing their eerie dirges, which were supposed to ensure rest for the soul.

In the case of the poor, the body was enclosed in a coffin of wickerwork that belonged to the parish. The bottom of this receptacle was hinged so that, after the body had been lowered into the grave, this crate could be used again when required. It was called "caisil chrò."

After the burial, the neighbours continued their "wakes" at the grave until the next interment, sheltering in small rude huts, called "brothain caithris."

SUPERSTITIONS.

All their movements were carried out, so far as possible, in strict accordance with the direction of the apparent motion of the sun. An instance of this observance has already been given in the stanza quoted from the "quern" song. When putting to sea, they rowed the boat sunwise at first, the contrary course being supposed to be the prelude to certain disaster.

In order that they might bring auspicious weather conditions, they poured libations into the sea, or on sacred stones in their chapels, and a similar rite was performed when fish had forsaken the coasts, for thereby they sought to conciliate the spirit that presided over the produce of the sea.

The being that controlled the yield of the flocks was called "Gruagach"—a long-haired woman, whose malicious interference with the cattle could be counteracted only by weekly offerings of milk poured into the hollow of the "gruagach" stone of the district. The "evil"-eye was also considered to be responsible for charming the milk away from the cows; and in order to defeat its machinations people had recourse to various practices. The person whose stock was affected sometimes perambulated the district in which the individual suspected of possessing the evil influence resided, and, going from house to house, he exhibited the milk whose quality had been impaired, in order that the eye that charmed its essence away might behold it, and thereby restore its stolen property. These sinister persons were invariably witches, who, in the shape of cat or hare, carried out their nefarious work in the stillness of the night. In their assumed appearance they were sometimes maimed by dogs; and the injury persisting, even after they had reverted to the human form, they were thus identified!

The belief in the existence of second-sight held then a strong grip on the imagination of the people. They were persuaded that it was wholly an involuntary power, that even pained its unfortunate possessor. It is on record that a servant of the Rev. Dugald MacPherson, who was minister of Duirinish at this time, was endowed with this faculty, and that he warned his master that the corn the latter was about to parch in a kiln would be consumed by fire; and, notwithstanding every precaution, the whole consignment was destroyed as foretold. On the repetition of the process, and a similar premonition having being given, a like result ensued.

As in previous centuries, and for many succeeding years, the time for commencing any labour was determined by the phases of the moon. Certain operations were entered upon when the moon was waning, to ensure a speedy contraction by drought; others again were to be begun only when the moon was new, if there was desire for increase. And certain days of the week were considered to be unpropitious for specified undertakings, the most lucky being Monday; the least favourable, Saturday. The following quatrain illustrates this quaint notion:

"Imrich Sathurna mu thuath,
Imrich Diluain mu dheas.
Ged nach biodh agam ach an t-uan
'San Diluain a dh' fhalbhainn leis."

DRESS.

The men wore the tartan kilt and plaid, each district having its own fancy in the manner of colouring and design, so that, according to Martin, it was possible to tell the place of residence of a man by the pattern of his dress. The trews, also, was then an article of clothing. Thus, in his description of the grandeur of the Castle of Duntulm, during the chiefship of Sir Donald, the first baronet of Sleat, who died in 1643, Iain Lom makes mention of the fact that:

"Gur lionmhor triubhas saoithearach seang ann."

The arasaid was worn by the women, and was a white plaid with a few stripes of blue, black, and red colours, and it extended to the heels. It was constricted around the waist by a belt that was tied by a buckle of silver, or brass, according to the station of its wearer. Some of these buckles were of extravangant size, being, according to Martin, as large as "a pewter plate." They were set in the centre with a large crystal, while the circumference was studded with smaller stones. Some wore a leathern belt adorned with pieces of silver.

The matron was distinguished from the maiden by having her hair covered by the "breid," or "coif"; while the latter wore the "stim," or "snood."

All the materials for clothing were manufactured in the home; and natural dyes, locally prepared, were used in the colouring of the apparel.

THE BARDS.

ARCHIBALD MACDONALD ("AN CIARAN MABACH").

This poet and warrior was a son of Do'ull Gorm Og MacGhillespic Chléirich, the first baronet of Sleat. He was not, as is erroneously stated by MacKenzie, in "The Beauties of Gaelic Poetry," the "son of Sir Alexander MacDonald, sixteenth baronet of Slate"; for that step has not even yet been reached in the baronetcy of that house, as the present holder of the diginity is only the fourteenth in descent from Sir Donald, the father of our bard.

The bard's name was Archibald; "Gillespic Ruadh," he was sometimes called; and is so named by Iain Lom in one of his songs. In view of that designation, it is difficult to account for the nickname "Ciaran," or "Dusky One," that is more commonly assigned to him, the epithet, "Mabach," having probably been applied because of an impediment in speech.

We first hear of him in 1654, when he secured a wadset for the district of Bornaskitaig, in Trotarnish; but it would appear that he also occupied lands in North Uist. He was resident in the latter island when the chief, Sir James Mor, received from the Privy Council a commission of "fire and sword" against the murderers of the "Children of Keppoch." The chief delegated the duty to his brother, and the latter, with thirty trusty warriors, set off for Inverlair, under the guidance of Iain Lom, and soon brought the usurpers to justice.

So expeditiously and effectively had they executed the work entrusted to them, that Sir James received the thanks of the government, and Iain Lom paid the following tribute in verse to his brother bard:

"Slàn fod' thriall a Chiarain Mhabaich,
Shiubhladh sliabh gun bhiadh, gun chadal;
Fraoch fod' shin', gun bhòsd, gun bhagradh,
Chuir thu ceò fo 'n ròiseil bhradaich."

But it is from his fame as a bard, rather than his exploits as a soldier, that "An Ciaran Mabach" is now remembered. Of his works, only two pieces are extant, one, "B'annsa Cadal air Fraoch," written during an enforced sojourn in Edinburgh owing to a sprained foot, and the other a lament he composed on the death of his brother, the chief, Sir James Mor. The former is full of a poet's longing for the scenes and the pursuits he loved; and it is characterised by a pleasing imagery and a deep feeling for nature. How ecstatically he sings of the stag:

"'Nuair a thigeadh am foghar,
Bu bhinn leam gleadhar do chléibh;
Dol a ghabhail a' chrònain
Air a' mhòintich bhuig, réidh;
Dol an coinneamh do leannain,
Bu ghile feaman is céir;
Gur h-i 'n eilid bu bhòidhche,
'S bu bhrisge, lògh-mhora, ceum."

There is no straining after effect in the efforts of this bard. His diction flows unforced with a quiet, yet stately naturalness that is markedly pleasing to the fancy. His skilful vowel-play, the sweet harmony of his finely-filed phrase, its polish, its chastity, and its noble sentiment, all make one regret that so little of his work has been preserved; while these qualities force the conclusion on us that he had written much more that has been irretrievably lost.

As an example of perfect assonance, and the expression of genuine pathos, there is little in Gaelic poetry to surpass the following stanza from "Marbhrann," or the lament he composed on the death of his brother, Sir James, in 1678:

"Fàth m' acain, 's mo thùrsa,
Nach dùisgear le teud thu,
No le toraghan na fìdhle,
Mo dhìobhuill, 's mo léir-chreach:
Fhir a chumadh i dìonach,
Dh' aindheoin siantann 'gan éiread,
'N diugh fo leacann na h-ùrach,
Gun mo dhùil ri thu éirigh."

Very few facts are known of the life of this poet. He died about the year 1688.

MAIRI NI'N ALASDAIR RUAIDH.

That assonantal property, which is so characteristic a feature of the works of "An Ciaran Mabach," has been brought to the acme of expression by Màiri Ni'n Alasdair Ruaidh, the bardess of Dunvegan.

Much has been written about this poetic genius; but we know very little that is really authentic concerning the facts of her life. Most authors draw their information from "The Beauties of Gaelic Poetry," though the account given there is, in many instances, wholly unreliable. The date of her birth, given by MacKenzie as 1569, is obviously wrong, for we know that she was writing her best poetry over a century after that time. It is clear that the verse:

"Bha fios co sibh
Ann an iomartas rìgh,
'Nuair bu mhuladach strì Thearlaich,"

refers to the part the MacLeods played on the side of the Stuarts at Worcester, and after; while her poem, "Cumha Do Mhac Leòid," was written on the death of the chief, Roderick, "The Witty," an event that happened in 1664.

And there is as much uncertainty concerning the date of her death; for if, as is generally stated, it took place in 1693, she would then have attained the phenomenal age of 124 years. Then, again, her "Cumha Mhic Leoid" was written by her as a lament, on the death of her patron, Sir Norman of Bernera, the warrior son of Sir Rory Mor; and as he died in 1705, she must have lived to the age of 136 years at least, if 1569 was the date of her birth.

Furthermore, MacKenzie declares that he heard a poem composed by her, but never published, in which she averred she had nursed five lairds of the MacLeods, and two of Applecross; and "the song ends with an address to 'Tormad nan tri Tormaid.'" Now this "third successive Norman" was the heir of the chief, General MacLeod; and as he was killed on board the "Queen Charlotte" about 1790, it is evident that Màiri Ni'n Alasdair Ruaidh could not have been the author of that composition.

MacKenzie affirms, in addition, that most of her poetry was written in praise of a chief whom he calls "Sir Norman." Now, of the chiefs of the name of Norman who approach nearest to her time, the first died in 1585, and the next assumed the chiefship in 1699; and it is noteworthy that, of all the chiefs of the name of Norman in the House of Dunvegan, none had ever received the honour of knighthood.

In his efforts to explain the reason for her banishment, MacKenzie makes the extraordinary statement (exhibiting a woeful lack of understanding of the psychology of that time) that the chief so resented the songs his panegyrist composed in his praise, that he drove her into exile to the Isle of Mull!

The subject of the pæans of Màiri Ni'n Alasdair Ruaidh was none other than the famous Sir Norman of Bernera, the third son of Sir Rory Mor; and it has been suggested that it was because she extolled the praises of a cadet of the clan that the chief, out of pique, had banished her.

In all, ten pieces of her works have been preserved; and of these it is apparent, from internal evidence, that five were composed to Sir Norman. These are "Fuaim an t-Saimh," "An Talla 'm bu Ghnàth," "Luinneag Mhic Leòid," "Sàth-Ghal Mhàiri Ni'n Alasdair Ruaidh," and "Cumha Mhic Leòid"; while one of her poems, namely, "Oran," was written for Sir Norman's son, John of Contullich.

Of the remaining poems, one named "Cumha Do MhacLeòid," was composed on the death of the chief, Roderick, "The Witty"; and to his son, Norman, who was always in delicate health, and who predeceased his father, she sang her "An Crònan" on his recovery from an illness. "Cumha Iain Ghairbh" was her lament on the occasion of the drowning of the young laird of Raasay, with all his crew, off the rocky shore of Staffin; and her first composition was a lament on the death of another of her patrons, MacKenzie of Applecross, who died in 1646.

One of her poems requires special treatment, for there has been much misunderstanding concerning its theme. This is the lament, "Cumha Mhic Leòid"; and all who have written about the bardess maintain that it was composed on the death of the chief, Iain Breac, an event that happened in 1693. There is much in the poem to support that view. The bardess makes frequent mention of the princely generosity of her patron; and we know that Iain Breac was perhaps the most hospitable chief of his age. Another item in this evidence, that has been thought to place that theory beyond doubt, is the fact that the chief was married to Florence, the daughter of Sir James MacDonald of Sleat; and it has been supposed that the poetess refers to her in the verse:

"Inghinn Sheumais nan crùn,
Bean chéile ghlan ùr," etc.

But a closer investigation easily disposes of the supposition that Iain Breac was the subject of her verse. Thus we know that at least three of the poems of Màiri Ni'n Alasdair Ruaidh are in praise of Sir Norman of Bernera, and, in all of these, she records his generosity, his friendliness, and his patronage of the bards, the musicians, and the story-tellers. In the poems "Fuaim an t-Saimh," "An Talla 'm bu Ghnàth," and "Luinneag Mhic Leòid," Sir Norman is definitely mentioned by name. Among the many qualities she ascribes to him in the last, she praises him who is "fiughant, fial, farsuinn"; while in "Cumha" he is said to be "fiughant, measail, cuilmeach, gibhteil"—epithets that are practically synonymous with the foregoing. But what disposes of the main prop of the generally accepted theory, that Iain Breac is referred to in the poem, is the fact that Sir Norman, too, was married to a daughter of Sir James MacDonald. In "Fuaim an t-Saimh," she is mentioned as "Nighean Oighre Dhuin Thuilm," and in the poem under review as "Inghinn Sheumais Nan Crun."

On pressing the inquiry further, other facts emerge that immediately rule out the notion that Iain Breac is the subject of the lament. For example, she calls her hero "Mac Ruairi reachdmhor," clearly pointing to Sir Norman's father, the capable chief, Sir Rory Mor, while the father of Iain Breac was called John Mor.

Again, Iain Breac was a man of peace, who, during the troublous times that prevailed in the period of the Revolution, held aloof from any participation in the various risings, despite the pressure brought to bear on him, both by his brother chiefs and the deposed king himself. But the person mentioned in this poem is a warrior of renown, one who is at all times accoutred in the soldier's panoply. He is mounted on a—

" Each cruidheach ceannard
Is lann ùr than' ort,"

and he is—

" Sàr mhac 'ic Leòid
Nam bratach sròil,"

referring, no doubt, to the part Sir Norman played on behalf of Charles II. at Worcester, and after it.

In a poem by the "Clarsair Dall," called "Creach Nan Ciadan," lamenting the death of Iain Breac, that chief is said to have died in Easter Week:

" Chaill mi 'n ùr ghibt' a chreach mi,
Ann an seachduin na Ceusda";

while the person referred to in " Cumha Mhic Leòid " died on the 3rd of March:

" An treas latha de'n Mhàrt
Dh' fhalbh m' aighear gu bràth";

and it is obvious that Easter Week could not in any year fall so early as the 3rd of March. That, in itself, proves that the subject of " Cumha Mhic Leòid " is not Iain Breac; and much more could be adduced to show that the lament was composed on the death of Sir Norman of Bernera.

AN CLARSAIR DALL.

Roderick Morrison, the famous harper of Dunvegan, was a native of the Island of Lewis, where he was born in the year 1646. He was thus a contemporary of Màiri Ni'n Alasdair Ruaidh. His father was a clergyman, and it was decided to educate young Roderick for the Church also.

Whilst he was pursuing his education in Inverness, he was seized with the dread malady of smallpox, and so severe was its incidence that it deprived him of his eyesight, and he was forced to relinquish his studies for the ministry.

Like many another who had been similarly afflicted, he took up the study of music, and he evinced such a wonderful aptitude for the art that he soon came to be reckoned the most skilful performer of his age. The excellence of his gifts so captivated MacLeod's generous chief, Iain Breac, that he was appointed to the post of family harper in the Castle of Dunvegan.

In addition to his having been an outstanding exponent of the music of the harp, he was also a composer of renown; but it appears that his works in this connection have been lost, if they had, indeed, ever been committed to writing. Now he is chiefly remembered for his poetry, which has secured for him an abiding niche in the hall of Celtic fame.

Of his poetical works, only five pieces have been preserved; and it is noteworthy that all of them. with one exception, were written in praise of his chief, Iain Breac MacLeod. His verse is characterised by an engaging diction, a pleasing harmony, and a lofty style, features that are no doubt traceable, at least in part, to his highly cultivated taste in music. His rare artistry is perhaps best exemplified in "Oran Mór Mhic Leòid," a composition in which he mourns the change that has come over the hospitable halls of Dunvegan since the death of the munificent chief, Iain Breac, and the accession of the son and heir, Roderick, who cares nothing for the traditions and the arts of his own people.

A few personages of historic importance, referred to in his poems, deserve special mention. For example, in his "Oran," he addresses Norman, the second son of Iain Breac, as follows:

> "Ma thuirt iad ogha Thormoid riut,
> B'i sud an fhoirm-fhuil ghlan;
> Ma thuirt iad iar-ogha Ruairi riut,
> B'i 'n àrd-fhuil uaibhreach, mhear.
> 'S ogha 'n Eoin gun truailleadh,
> Thug suairceas air gach neach,
> Mac an fhir nach b' fhuathach leam,
> An nochd thog suas mo ghean."

Although the relationship attributed to him in the first line is obscure, there can be no doubt that the person referred to is Norman, the son of Alasdair Crotach, and the eleventh chief of MacLeod, who was the great-great-grandfather of the subject of this poem. The chief mentioned in the third line is Sir Rory Mor, whose son, John Mor, is spoken of in fifth line; while in the seventh line he extolls his patron, Iain Breac.

In that meritorious composition of his, "Creach Nan Ciadan," written on the death of the last-mentioned chief, the poet exhorts young Roderick, the heir, to uphold the honour of the name he bears, and preserve it from any slur:

> " Ma's tusa rinn suas
> An ceathramh Ruairi, na dearmaid,
> Lean ri sinnsireachd d' aitean,
> 'S na toir masladh do 'n ainm sin."

He then speaks of his namesakes as follows:

> " Ruairi reachdmhor, run-meanmnach,
> Tartach, toirbheartach, teannshath,
> Do shi-seanair 'o 'n tainig,
> Cha b' ion do nàmhaid dol teann air,
> 'S Ruairi gasda na dhéidh,
> Cha b' e roghainn bu tàire,
> 'S an treas Ruairi fa dheireadh,
> Cha b' e 'n gainneanach fàs e."

The three persons of the name of Roderick mentioned in this verse are, respectively, Sir Rory Mor, Sir Roderick of Talisker, and Roderick the Witty.

Under the regime of that Roderick to whom this exhortation was addressed, a new dispensation was observed in Dunvegan, so that those members of the last chief's retinue who cultivated the muses were treated with cold indifference; and, knowing that "their date was fled," this last minstrel left Skye for his native Lewis, where he died about 1725, and was buried in the churchyard of his fathers at Eye, near Stornoway.

Lachlainn MacThearlaich Oig.

This fine poet was one of the MacKinnons of Strath, his father being Tearlach Og, the second son of the chief, Lachlainn Dubh, and his mother, Marion MacLeod of Drynoch. He was born about the year 1665 in Scalpay, of which island his father was then tacksman. Young Lachlan was liberally educated, as became one who was a cadet of the House of MacKinnon. When he attained manhood, he farmed the Island of Pabay, together with that portion of the adjacent mainland known as Ardnish.

He was twice married. First to a Miss Campbell from Harris, a lady of elegant ways and amiable demeanour, who died within a year after marriage. His second marriage was a very unhappy one, for his lot fell on a widow, a Xantippe, who despised his talents, and whose termagancy made his old age a misery. He had a daughter, a love-child, who was greatly attached to him, and who, inheriting his own poetical gifts, was the solace of his later years.

One of the best known of his works is "Latha Siubhal Sléibhe," an allegorical composition after the theme of "Oran Mór Mhic Leòid," by Clàrsair Dall, in which he regrets the changes that had supervened in the Highlands, when the chiefs neglected the native arts and sought the allurements of the south instead. He composed a lament to John MacLeod, second of Talisker, "Cumha Mhic Leòid Thalascar," and it appears in "The Gaelic Bards." His "Oran," to the daughter of MacKinnon of Gemball, is marked by very superior artistry. It is characterised by a faultless rhyme and untrammelled rhythm; so that, although the whole piece moves at a high speed, there are no impediments to its graceful and smoothly-flowing diction. It is one of the earliest love-songs extant in our language, and it ranks high among compositions of that order. One stanza is quoted in illustration of its ease of movement and the unforced harmony of its verse:

"Ach òigh na mais', is òrbhuidh falt,
'S do ghruaidh air dhreach an neòinean;
Tha éideadh grinn, mu dheud do chinn,
'S do bheul bho'm binn thig òrain.
Ruisg thana, chaoin, fo-d' mhala chaoil,
'S do mheallshuil mhin 'ga seòladh;
'S i 'n t-seirc tha t'eudann, ghreas gu eug mi,
Mur toir a' chléir dhomh còir ort."

The poet lived to a ripe old age, and he was buried in the churchyard of Kilchro, in Strath. It is noteworthy that the first of the famous succession of MacKinnon ministers in Strath, viz., Rev. Donald MacKinnon, was the great-grandson of the bard, Lachlainn MacThearlaich Oig.

The MacCrimmons.

As the MacCrimmons were at the height of their fame during the latter part of the seventeenth century, it is appropriate that a brief sketch of that celebrated family should be given here.

The early history of their race is shrouded in obscurity, and, as always happens in such a case, wild conjectures have been framed about their origin, and still wilder surmises formed as to the derivation of their family name.

Some have gone so far as to postulate that Cremona, in the Plain of Lombardy, is the place whence they sprang, and derived their name. Some, like the late Dr. George Henderson, suggest they may belong to a Norse stock; and he, accordingly, derives their name from Hromunder, which means "noted protector." Others, again, point to Ireland as the original home of the family, and, from what we know of the barderie and the music of that country, that opinion is not an untenable one.

In "The MS. History of the MacLeods of Dunvegan," it is averred that they can be traced to the south of Harris, where they owned a considerable portion of land under the rule of the Norse, and, later, under Paul Balkeson. It is not known when they came to Skye, nor whence, with any degree of certitude; nor are we sure who was the first of them to become an exponent of piobaireachd.

The earliest of them, of whom there is any definite knowledge, was called Iain Odhar (John, "the Dun"), probably from his sallow complexion; and he was a piper of such skill, and was endowed with such high culture, that it is safe to conclude that many exponents of his art went before him.

Iain Odhar lived about the beginning of the sixteenth century; and we know that the bagpipes had not been introduced into the Highlands long before that time. It is quite possible, however, that the MacCrimmons were skilful players of the harp, and may have been composers of its music, before they began to cultivate the other and more romantic instrument, the bagpipes.

The first of the MacLeods who is said to have patronised the MacCrimmons was the famous warrior, Alasdair Crotach; and Iain Odhar flourished during his chiefship. He assigned to the family the district of Borreraig, where they lived, free of all feudal impositions, their only obligation being to train at least one son for the office of piper to the chief. During the reign of Iain Breac they occupied Galtrigill as well.

At Borreraig they founded a college of piping that was destined to become the most famous of its kind in the world. The tuition that was given there was of such a high order that it became a custom with most of the chiefs of the Highlands to send their young pipers thither in order to complete their training. Even the MacArthurs of Skye, who conducted a minor institution of their own, did not consider it an indignity to study under the MacCrimmons. The famous piper-bard, John Mackay ("Am Piobaire Dall"), was perhaps one of their most notable students.

There seems to be no doubt now that what raised the MacCrimmons to such a position of pre-eminence as masters of their instrument was their unique system of notation. It is called "cainntearachd," or "vocalising"; and it consisted in expressing the notes by means of syllables, the roots of which were definite vowels. Thus the highest note was *i* (ee) and the lowest *u* (oo). By all accounts, this system of notation made piping easy, and it suited the scale of the chanter more effectively than any other method of recording musical signs.

The MacArthurs, who were hereditary pipers to the MacDonalds in Trotarnish, seem to have invented a system of notation of their own; but the vocables they employed were entirely different from those that made the MacCrimmon cainntearachd so famous.

In addition to their unrivalled technical skill, the MacCrimmons were the most noted composers of pipe music; and it seems to be true that it was they who gave its peculiar structure to "piobaireachd," or the classical music of the bagpipes. This major branch of pipe music ("ceòl mór," or "the great music," as it is sometimes called, to distinguish it from "ceol aotrom," or "the light music," that is concerned with reels, strathspeys, etc., and is considered by all pipers as inferior to the "piobaireachd"), consists of two main parts, namely, the "urlar" and the "siubhal." Every piobaireachd is founded on these. There are subsidiary components, called "crunluath" and "taobh-luath," with rapid offsets to each, which go under the specific name of "breabach." Most of the world's greatest piobaireachds were composed by the MacCrimmons.

Some of the most famous of these compositions are "Màl Donn," or "MacCrimmon's Sweetheart," produced by Iain Odhar, the first of the line, in praise of the bag of his pipes. "MacDonald's Salute," and "Failte nan Leodach" or "MacLeod's Welcome," were composed by Donald Mor MacCrimmon in 1601, when the reconcilement was effected between Rory Mor and Donald Gorm Mor, after the war called "Cogadh na Cailliche Caime."

The son of Donald Mor was called Pàdruig Mór; and he is perhaps the most famous of the race. He was the author of several piobaireachds, the best known of which are "Cumha na Cloinne" ("Lament for the Children"), composed on the death of seven of his children during the course of a single year; "Thug mi Pòg do Laimh an Rìgh" ("I Kissed the King's Hand"), which he composed on the occasion when he accompanied his chief, Iain Mór, who visited Charles II at Whitehall, after the Restoration:

"Thug mi pòg, is pòg, is pòg,
Thug mi pòg do laimh a' rìgh,
Cha d' chuir gaoth 'n craicionn caorach
Fhuair 'n fhaoilt ud ach mi."

On the death of his generous patron, Sir Rory Mor, he composed that melting melody, "Cumha Ceann-Cinnidh nan Leodach." Other compositions of his are "Cumha an Aon Mhic" and "Lament for MacDonald of Glengarry." The wife of Sir Rory Mor was Isabel Mhor of Glengarry, and it is said that she was lulled to sleep every night of her life by the playing of that last plaintive piobaireachd by Padruig Mor MacCrimmon.

Padruig Mor was succeeded in the profession by Padruig Og, whose son, Malcolm, carried on the succession, and the last of this illustrious race to maintain the college in its position of pre-eminence was John Dubh.

Donald Ban MacCrimmon was killed at the Rout of Moy in 1746, and about thirty years after this that chief of MacLeod, Norman, "The Wicked Man," owing to the enhanced value of land, decided to take half of the farm of Borreraig from the MacCrimmons, saying he considered the remaining portion ample patronage for the office of piper. The chief's action so galled the retainer, that he left Borreraig altogether; and, according to the Rev. Archd. Clark, who wrote the "Statistical Account for Duirinish," the family renounced the pipes when they relinquished the farm in 1770.

Pipers, however, continued in the family, for the Rev. Dr. Norman MacLeod, "Caraid nan Gàidheal," says that on the home-coming of General Norman MacLeod of MacLeod from India, he heard Captain Donald MacCrimmon, who had served in the American War of Independence, play "Fàilte Ruairi Mhóir" on the battlements of Dunvegan Castle, and he concludes: "I can never forget the impression the whole scene made on my youthful mind." Another member of the family was Captain Peter MacCrimmon, who also had distinguished himself in the American War of Independence, and is reputed to have been a man of gigantic stature, and enormous strength.

Two of the pipes of the MacCrimmons are preserved in Dunvegan Castle; and one of them, designated "An Oinnseach," is still playable.

Owing to the magic art that this family possessed, we need not marvel at the gorgeous webs of fancy that tradition has woven around them. In order to account for their unique skill, it is said that one of the first of them received the gift of music from the fairies, who were held to be masters of the chanter. This member of the family, by name "Iain Og" (who may have been Iain Odhar), was playing in Sloc nam Pìobairean one calm evening, so the story runs, when a full moon was shining in the sky. On such a night an inspired piper can charm the best music from his instrument, and, as happens under such conditions, creatures of the night crowded around to listen to the enchanting strains of the pipe of Iain Og. The fairies were there in force, spellbound by the sweetness of the music. After they had been regaled for some time, one of them, the queen, it is said, approached the young piper, and thus accosted him: "Young man, your matchless playing has moved me to confer on you your choice of two gifts which it is in my power to bestow. Tell me, then, which you prefer, 'Ealain gun rath, no rath gun ealain'" (Skill without fame, or fame without skill). Unhesitatingly the young piper replied: "Give me skill to play this music, and let prosperity and fame go to those who love not art for art's sake." "Few mortals would have chosen as you do, fair youth," said the fairy, "and your ideals therefore entitle you to more than falls to the lot of ordinary men. You shall not only have skill transcending that of any of your predecessors, but you shall also have fame that will make your posterity proud of the name they bear." Having said so, she handed him the silver chanter, "A chachalaidh dhubh," and she departed with her train.

"Thug do mhaise 's ceòl do phìoba
Leannan sìthe air do thòir,
Sineam dhuit an sionnsair airgid
A bhios bìnn gun chearb fo d' mheòir."

In due time Iain Og became the most skilled of pipers, and his genius was perpetuated in his race down the ages. This, of course, is not history—but what of that!

> " 'S furbaidh, tailceant, 's cumta pearsa
> Treun laoch, spraiceil, dòid-gheal;
> Pìob 'ga spalpadh suas 'na achlais
> Mhosglas lasan gleòis duinn.
> Caismeachd bhrasbhinn, bhrodadh aigne
> Gu dian chasgairt slòigh leis,
> Chiureadh toraghan a' phuirt bhaisgeil
> Spiorad bras 'nar pòraibh."

CHAPTER XI.

FAMILY HISTORY, 1700-1746.

THE MACLEODS.

THE opening of the eighteenth century saw the installation of a new chief in Dunvegan. This was Norman, the second son of Iain Breac, who succeeded his brother, Roderick, in the year 1699.

In manners and bearing Norman was the exact antithesis of his brother, the late chief, for he was the patron of the bards and the musicians, a lover of learning, who aimed at the restoration of the ancient customs of his race. The minstrels and the singers were once again made welcome in the hospitable halls of Dunvegan, and they failed not to record their appreciation of his noble conduct. Two poets of note enthusiastically sang his praises. In that remarkable composition, "Latha Siubhal Sléibhe," by Lachlainn MacThearlaich Oig, the bard allegorically recounts his meeting with three of the native virtues—Clemency, Love, and Generosity, which were now homeless wanderers among the hills of Skye. They tell him their sad plight is due to the passing of the large-hearted Chief of MacLeod:

"Tormad fial an t-sùgraidh
Nach d' fhàs m'a chùineadh cruaidh;
A bha gu fearail, fiùghantach,
'S a chum a dhùthchas suas";

while Neil MacVurich, in the "Book of Clan Ranald," thus extols his name:

"Roighne freime fionlochan
En lenan eigseg.
Forus uird na h-ealadhan,
Abbàs do dhearbh dochract di
Feadhbh gan fhortachd an eigsi."

There is little else to record of the brief career of this chief. In 1703 he married his cousin, Ann Fraser, daughter of Hugh, eleventh Lord Lovat, and by her he had an only child, a son, who was born posthumously in the year 1706.

NORMAN, NINETEENTH CHIEF—"THE WICKED MAN."

The son, born a few months after the death of the last chief, was also called Norman. During the nonage of the heir, the management of affairs was confided in a small body of the principal men of the clan; and such was the skill and the devotion with which they carried out their trust, that a vast fortune was accumulated, and to it the young chief automatically fell heir on the attainment of his majority. His inheritance must have been an enormous one; for, in addition to a patrimony already considerable, and consisting of the estates of Glenelg, Harris, and the various portions of Skye that belonged to the family, a new capital of about £60,000 accrued to him. He was thus rightly considered to be one of the wealthiest chiefs of his time. In an account of the Highland clans, written in 1725, it is stated that "this chief," viz., Macleod, "possesses the greatest estate of any in the Highlands. . . . In Skye, where most of his clan reside, there are a great number of gentlemen of good account."

But he, whose prestige had been raised to such a pitch by the ability and the care of his guardians, was a man who was fated to give nothing but disappointment in return. Inordinately vain of display, he lent untrammelled rein to a spirit of reckless extravagance, so that he early gave cause for real alarm to those who had the welfare of their clan at heart. Like his uncle, Roderick, he found little to interest him in the concerns of the clan beyond the contribution it might make towards the satisfaction of unnatural yearnings after a riotous life. He had aspirations after parliamentary honours, and in 1732, when he was twenty-six years of age, he contested his native county, but was unsuccessful. Nine years later, however, he succeeded in his candidature, after much intrigue and bribery, and represented Inverness-shire from 1741 until 1754, a period of thirteen years.

During that time many matters, some of which were of great moment, fall to be recorded. The chief had already been married in 1726 to Janet, the youngest daughter of Sir Donald of Sleat ("Do'ull a' Chogaidh"), a lady whom he treated with heartless cruelty. She early lost his love, and was forced to leave him, as he was shamelessly consorting with other women. One of his paramours was a Miss Anne Martin, a beautiful girl who dwelt in the neighbourhood, and whom he married on the death of his lawful spouse. That incident, by the way, gave rise to dark hints. It is said that, after a separation of several years, he sent a courier to Mogstadt, where his wife then lived, imploring her to return to Dunvegan, and promising that he was prepared for a full reconciliation. The unsuspecting lady was persuaded to comply, but shortly after her return she was reported to have died under mysterious circumstances; and some have gone so far as to aver that she had been starved to death in the dungeon of the castle.

Meanwhile the chief continued on his career of extravagance. The family wealth, vast as it was, began to show signs of sore depletion; and it was apparent to all that the estate was swiftly heading towards bankruptcy. For the capital that had accrued to him through the careful husbanding of resources by the *curators boni*, during the period of his minority, was now all gone, and many thousands more; but he continued to squander and to gamble the patrimony away, as though that were to him the chief end of life. Need we marvel, then, that this chief had earned for himself the unenviable title of "An Droch Dhuine," or "The Wicked Man"?

LADY GRANGE.

And he was implicated in still another transaction that does not serve to redeem his name. That was the abduction of the ill-starred Lady Grange. His guilt in connection with that affair was not, be it said, any deeper than that of many another Highland chief; but, during the years she had been hidden from the world, he had more to do with her custody than anyone else.

"The true story of this lady," as Boswell says in the "Journal" of his tour, "is as frightfully romantic as if it had been the fiction of a gloomy fancy." Ann Chiesley, as was her maiden name, was married to James Erskine, Lord Grange, a senator of the College of Justice , and a brother of "Bobbing" John, Earl of Mar, who raised the Jacobite Rebellion of 1715. She was cursed with a congenital irascibility of temper, bordering at times on insanity, which strained the relations, never very cordial, between herself and her husband. The latter was an ardent Jacobite; she, a devoted Hanoverian; and some have even suggested that she was a government spy. In any case, Jacobite intrigues were then afoot; and, about the year 1730, Lord Grange was deeply embroiled in some of these. His home in Edinburgh was the rendezvous of those who favoured the "King Across the Water," and conclaves were held there with such frequency that his lady became suspicious, and, having secured certain papers belonging to her husband, threatened to disclose his activities and those of his associates, among whom were Simon Fraser of Lovat, Sir Alexander MacDonald of Sleat, and Norman MacLeod of Dunvegan.

In 1731 an assemblage of conspirators was gathered at the home of Lord Grange; and, after some had gone away, a few of the prime movers in the plot remained behind to discuss momentous affairs. All this time Lady Grange had been a spy on the proceedings, having ensconsed herself beneath a sofa. A sneeze, however, betrayed her presence; and on her being challenged, she bluntly declared that she would show no hesitation in revealing the plot to the authorities. Without further ado, those present decided, with the connivance of her husband, to spirit her away to some remote spot in the Highlands, where she could no longer interfere with those who were interested in the Jacobite cause.

Horses were got ready; and, under the cloak of night, she was blindfolded, while her hands were tied behind her back. She cursed, kicked, and bit her kidnappers; in the struggle, we are told, she lost two of her front teeth. Strong arms, however, soon forced her into the saddle, and she was hastened into the fastnesses of the North, under the escort of John MacLeod of Bernera, a cadet of the House of Dunvegan, and a MacDonald of Morar.

Next morning a report was spread abroad to the effect that Lady Grange had suddenly died, and people were asked to her funeral. Many attended the ceremony, when a coffin, filled with sods, was solemnly interred in the Churchyard of Greyfriars in Edinburgh.

By this time the person who had been accorded the mock-burial was being hurried by unfrequented ways into the Highlands. A halt was made for the first time at Castle Tirrim; but, as no place on the mainland was considered to be safe, she was forthwith conveyed to Idrigil, in MacLeod's country in Skye.

According to the Rev. A. Clark, who wrote the "New Statistical Account for the Parish of Duirinish," it was from this place, and not from St. Kilda, as is generally supposed, she sent intelligence to her friends of her whereabouts. This was effected by means of a note, cleverly concealed in a clew of woollen yarn; but her custodians soon learned of the intention of her relatives to make an attempt at her recovery, and immediately took steps to have her removed once again—this time to an island called Heisker, on the wild west of North Uist.

A boat was manned, and one of the crew sat beside the hapless prisoner, holding a rope, with a large stone attached to one end of it, and a running noose formed on the other, so that, if the government sloop should be encountered on the way, the captive was to be raised over the side of the boat, and as expeditiously and as quietly as possible consigned to the deep. But she was destined to "dree her weird" for many a year to come; for that boat that might have mercifully saved her from the miseries that were in store was never sighted. On Heisker she was kept in close captivity for two long years, under the care of the local tacksman, a cadet of Sir Alexander MacDonald.

Information concerning the activities of her friends once more raised alarm in the minds of her gaolers, who determined to transfer her to lonely St. Kilda, where she was to suffer further torments. There she was detained for seven years among a people who understood not a word of her language, and whose speech was utterly foreign to her. Her sufferings during that time must have been bitter in the extreme; and we need not marvel at her description of the place of her imprisonment as a "neasty, stinking, poor isle."

Once again her friends got information of her place of confinement, and her captors despatched her to the wilds of Assynt. Her detention there was but brief; and she was finally removed to Skye, where she was concealed in a cave near the point of Idrigil, in Duirinish. After some time, she was accorded a certain measure of freedom; but her faculties were now beginning to fail, and she was allowed to wander about among the kindly-disposed people, a wrecked mind in a restless body, until death put an end to her chequered career in the year 1745.

She died in a cottar's hut in Waternish; and once again her burial was made a mockery, for, while a coffin weighted with sods was consigned to a grave in Duirinish, her body was taken to

Trumpan, and was secretly buried in the ancient churchyard, situated on the bare and wind-swept plateau above the bay of Ardmore. A few feet from the north wall of the ruined chapel there, a grey rectangular slab marks her grave. In the hall of the Castle of Dunvegan is still shown the cruisie she used in St. Kilda; whilst certain documents, yellow with age, attest that the cost of her board was defrayed by MacLeod, and that it amounted to £30 per annum. This shows that, in so far at least as the creature comforts were concerned, she was amply provided for; and it is a strange coincidence that the amount spent yearly on her maintenance was practically equivalent to the expenses of her funeral. The liberality of the former sum may have to be accounted for as being partly "hush money"; for MacLeod, now a M.P., was no doubt anxiously concerned about his part in the sequestration; and he would go to any length to prevent its gaining publicity. That attempts were made to take advantage of his state of anxiety in this connection is shown by another document in Dunvegan Castle. It is a letter, addressed to the Chief, by the man who was entrusted with the removal of Lady Grange from St. Kilda; and therein is a threat, intimating that if he were not given a larger sum of money than was offered him, he would reveal the location of the captive. It is not known whether or not this extortioner was ever accorded any satisfaction.

The stirring times of "The '45" were now arriving in the Highlands; and it is necessary for us to take a brief restrospect, in order to bring forward the story of the MacDonalds. Their history has been carried to the time of the death of the redoubtable warrior, Sir Donald MacDonald, the third baronet, who died in 1695.

"DO'ULL A' CHOGAIDH," THE FOURTH BARONET OF SLEAT.

Sir Donald was succeeded by his oldest son, Donald, a man who, as we have already seen, had greatly distinguished himself at the Battle of Killiecrankie in 1689; and, in consequence of his warlike exploits then, and subsequently, he is known to history as "Do'ull a' Chogaidh," or "Donald of the War." The young chief was a man of great stature, fine appearance, and of a most engaging and commanding personality. Like his father, he was always active in the Stuart cause, and he was privy to all the intrigues of the Jacobites.

During the early years of his chiefship he was often from home. In 1714 he bought an estate at Culross. He was at that time deeply embroiled in treasonable activities with many other Highland lairds, but, like them, he signed the address of welcome to King George I. Those in authority knew that such signatures were not worth the paper they were written on; and it was undoubtedly for that reason that Sir Donald was commanded by the then Lord Advocate to make a declaration of allegiance to King George, and, on his refusal to sign such an undertaking, he was immediately put into prison in the city of Glasgow. Such high-handed action served but to accentuate his bias; and, on his release, he returned to Skye with bitterness in his heart against the government. He had no sooner arrived home than he was visited in Duntulm by other Jacobite leaders, among whom was Simon Fraser, the Earl of Lovat. Many earnest conferences were held there, and the cause of the House of Stuart was always uppermost as a topic of discussion. It was soon evident that Sir Donald had resolved on a momentous undertaking, from the preparations that were afoot. His charter-chest, with other precious possessions of the family, he sent, under the care of a trusted vassal, to the islet called Bord Cruinn, or MacDonald's Table, a flat-topped rocky isle, with precipitous cliffs fronting the sea, and swept by such powerful currents that it would be impossible for a stranger, however great his skill, to gain access to it. The clan was summoned to arms, and a memorable festivity was held in Duntulm Castle on the eve of setting out in the rebellion. It has been said that this was the last ceremony of its kind that took place within these historic walls, and that Duntulm was then finally abandoned by the clan; but, as we shall see later, the MacDonalds remained in residence there for some time after this date.

The MacDonalds of Skye and Uist had meanwhile mustered to the number of about 800 men, who, with the famous piper, Angus MacArthur, at their head, presented a gallant array as they marched towards Kyle Akin. Not being in time for the gathering on Braemar, they joined forces with the Earl of Seaforth at Brahan Castle. ("Bu leat Sir Do'ull Shléibhte 'nuair dh'éireadh do chabar ort," sings Matheson, the bard of Seaforth.) Their first taste of fighting was in an encounter with several of the clans of Sutherland and of Ross, whom they sent to their homes, scattered in hopeless flight:

> "Theich iad uile 's cha do dh' fhuirich
> An treas duine bh' acasan,
> An t-Iarla Catach ruith e dhachaidh,
> 'S cha do lae e dhagaichean:
> Mac Aoidh nan creach, gu'n thàr e as,
> 'S ann dh' éigh e 'n t-each a b' aigeannaich,
> Ri gabhail an ratreuta,
> 'Nuair dh' éirich do chabar ort."

That classic epic, "Moladh Cabar Féidh," by the Aosdana MacMhathain, MacKenzie's family bard, clearly commemorates this affair, though the editor of "The Beauties of Gaelic Poetry" erroneously postulates another theme for it. In the poem, as given in "The Beauties," verses 6 to 9 are evidently interpolations, and may form part of the satire on the occasion of the invasion of the shielings, as stated by MacKenzie.

Flushed with their success, the Islesmen made for the south, overtaking the Earl of Mar at Perth. The Royalist forces, under the Earl of Argyle, were sent north to stem the activities of the insurgents, and they took up their position on Sheriffmuir, a few miles from the village of Dunblane. There they were attacked by the Jacobite army on the 14th of November, 1715. The MacDonalds, with about 150 MacKinnons, were marshalled on the right of Mar's forces, together with other clans of the west. Opposed to them were the veterans of Marlborough, disciplined and experienced warriors, who had harried the French eagles on Blenheim and Oudenarde, and who were commanded by a tried soldier named General Whethman.

When the command was given to begin the battle, the Highlanders, in the traditional fashion, having discharged their muskets, threw these weapons away, together with their bonnets and plaids, as mere impediments. Carrying swords and dirks only, they rushed with wild yells on the foe. Nothing human could withstand that furious onset, and Argyle's left was broken under the strain, and thrown into wild confusion. The flight became a rout. Nor was it stayed until the vanquished reached safety, within the walls of Stirling, five miles away from the field of battle.

But the brilliant achievement of the men of the West was rendered nugatory by the utter incompetence of Mar. When the victors returned from the pursuit, they discovered, to their chagrin, that the whole left wing of their army had given way to the Hanoverian forces, and had been driven beyond the Allan Water, a distance of two miles. Damped in their hopes, the Islesmen took up a strong position on a hill; and, although they still outnumbered the army of Argyle by over two to one, they had lost faith in their leader, and heart for the enterprise. For a few weeks longer they continued in the field with Mar.

It is noteworthy that this was the last occasion on which the MacDonalds of Skye fought as a clan. At Sheriffmuir they were commanded by two of the chief's brothers, namely, James of Oransay and William, the former of whom afterwards succeeded to the chiefship. Sir Donald himself had become ill on the way south to Perth, and had to be carried all the way back to Skye. There he was joined early in the following year by his clansmen, who returned disappointed at the treatment they had received at the hands of the Old Pretender and of Mar. As Sir Donald had not complied with the overtures made to him by the government for unconditional surrender, Royalist troops, under General Clayton, were sent to Skye. On their arrival, Sir Donald's men were disbanded, and he himself fled to his lands in Uist.

At this time General Cadogan, who was stationed at Inverness, was the government officer responsible for the pacification of the Highlands. By him the insurgent chiefs were commanded to present themselves at the castle of Inverlochy, before the 1st of June, 1716, on pain of attainder, and the forfeiture of their lands. Sir Donald answered by a letter, written in April, offering surrender, and acknowledging allegiance to the king, but craving exemption from the obligation of being personally present at Inverlochy on the ground of his continued state of indisposition. His plea was, however, rejected by the government, and, in June, 1716, he was declared guilty of treason, his estates being forfeited.

According to the Commissioners of Forfeited Estates, it would seem that Sir Donald had left Uist for Skye some time between April and the following June; and they used this information in defence of their sentence of forfeiture, saying that, as it had been possible to remove him to Duntulm, it was as easy to take him to Inverlochy; and the argument was upheld in the House of Lords.

The matter is interesting, apart altogether from other considerations, in that it shows that the castle of Duntulm had not yet been evacuated by the MacDonalds; indeed, in an account of the Highland clans, written in 1725, we find the statement: "The principal residence of the MacDonalds is Duntulm. They have also another place of residence, adorned with stately edifices, pleasant gardens, and other regular policies, called Armodel."

Sir Donald did not long survive these anxious times, for he died in March, 1718. It is said that it was he who revived the pattern of the tartan cloth worn by Donald of Harlaw, obtaining the scheme from a detailed description in verse that was sung by a woman weaver in the castle during the festivity that was held there on the night before the clan set off to join the rebellion of 1715.

Do'ull a' Chogaidh was married to Mary MacDonald of Castleton, in Sleat; and he had one son, Donald, who became chief in 1718.

SIR DONALD, FIFTH BARONET.

The chiefship of young Sir Donald fell on inauspicious times. His estates were still under sentence of forfeiture, and the rents were being collected and paid to the Commissioners of Forfeited Estates, through a factor they had appointed for that purpose. This agent was one of the MacLeods of Hamara, and his office made him the most hated man in Skye, despite the fact that he was a man of acumen who exercised the utmost prudence in the execution of his duties. A story told of him by Captain Thomas, in his "Traditions of the Morrisons," is worth recording. MacLeod was in the habit of travelling to Inverness with the king's rent, and accompanied only by one man as escort. This servant, weak in intellect but abnormally strong in body, proved himself to be a brave and faithful guardian, if at times somewhat slow in action. On one occasion, as they were resting in a wood, they were set upon by three highwaymen, who demanded money. The thieves, being offered a crown, rejected it with scorn, and became uproarious. MacLeod was now alarmed, and, as his escort was still soundly asleep, he was in an extremity of anxiety as to how to arouse him. Addressing one of the ruffians, he told him he would reward him well if he administered a thwack to his lethargic servant. The advice was no sooner given than acted upon, and the sleeping giant was on his feet at a bound. He wrenched the gun from the robber nearest to him, shot down one, battered out the brains of another, while the person who was first disarmed fled, and was brought down by MacLeod himself. Thereafter the factor considered it prudent to go to Inverness with an armed escort.

Sir Donald appealed again and again against the sentence of forfeiture; and, although the government was prepared to abrogate it, the House of Lords refused to sanction its removal. Owing to adverse weather conditions in the year 1718, crops had failed, and large numbers of cattle and sheep succumbed to the rigours of that wild winter; so that much poverty prevailed in Skye. Sir Donald did all that was possible to alleviate the terrible distress among his own people; for he was a man who had their welfare close to his heart.

And testing times had come to him shortly after his accession to the chiefship. Great expectations were then abroad of a formidable invasion of England by the joint armies of Sweden and Spain, and Sir Donald was eager to lend his aid to the cause of the fallen House of Stuart. One misfortune after another, however, befel the efforts of the Jacobite champions, Charles XII of Sweden and Alberonie, the puissant cardinal of Spain; and all that came of the threatened invasion was the abortive affair of Glenshiel in 1719.

Gladly would Sir Donald and his men have joined the insurrection; but the wiser counsels of a few of the elders of the clan prevailed. Foremost among the latter was the chief's uncle and successor, James of Oransay; and, fortunately for themselves, the clan took no action this time against the government.

In the following year—*i.e.*, 1720—the young Chief of the MacDonalds died in the prime of life, when eagerly engaged in his efforts to retrieve the fortunes of his people. He was a man of great promise, a born leader of men, and endowed with scholarly parts. He had been educated at the University of Glasgow.

SIR JAMES OF ORANSAY, SIXTH BARONET.

Sir Donald died childless in 1720; and the succession devolved on his uncle, Sir James, who, as we have already seen, had distinguished himself both at Killiecrankie and at Sheriffmuir. He also had been instrumental in preventing the late chief from throwing in his lot with the hopeless affair that ended in the debacle of Glenshiel. Sir James lived only a few weeks after his accession, and the Clan Donald of Skye were once again mourning the loss of a good chief—a frequent occurrence during the last forty-two years; for no fewer than five chiefs had died in that period. In a poem of condolence, written on the occasion of the death of the young wife of Sir James' son, Sir Alexander, Am Pìobaire Dall, the famous poet-piper, avers that he himself had been personally acquainted with six chiefs of the MacDonalds of Sleat.

"B' aithne dhomh Sir Seumas Mór,
(Second Baronet, died 1678.)
'S b' eòl dhomh Do'ull a mhac;
(Third Baronet, died 1695.)
B' eòl dhomh Do'ull eile rìs,
Chumadh fo chís na slòigh ceart.
(Do'ull a' chogaidh, died 1718.)
B' eòl dhomh Do'ull nan tri Do'uill,
Ge b' òg e, bu mhór a chliu;
Bhiodh fearaibh Alb' agus Eirinn,
Ag éirigh leis anns gach cùis:
(Fifth Baronet, died 1720.)
B' eòl dhomh Sir Seumas nan rùn
T' athair-sa mhic chliùtich féin;
(Sir James of Oransay, died 1720.)
'S tus a nis an siathamh glùn,
Dh'òrduich Righ nan Dùl 'nan déidh."
(Sir Alexander, Seventh Baronet.)

Sir James was married to Janet MacLeod of Greshornish. Two of their children were Sir Alexander, the heir, and a daughter, Margaret, who married Sir Robert Douglas of Glenbervie, the author of the famous "Baronage."

During the minority of the young heir, five notable men were appointed to act as regents. They were Alexander MacDonald of Glen Haultin, William MacDonald of Bornaskitaig, Donald MacDonald of Sartil, Norman MacLeod of Greshornish, and Donald MacLeod of Talisker, all of whom were most assiduous in their attention to their trust; but they were grieviously handicapped, in that the Commissioners of the Forfeited Estates still held their grip on the lands of the clan, and now advertised them for sale. It looked, indeed, as though the family patrimony were to be alienated from the House of Sleat; but such a catastrophe was happily averted by the loyalty of the cadets of the clan, and by other gentlemen who were zealous in its cause. Thus it happened that when the MacDonald's estates were brought to the hammer at Edinburgh, in 1723, instructions were sent by the wadsetters to a lawyer named William MacKenzie, to act as their agent, and to buy the estates. This transaction was duly carried out, and the lands were restored to the clan for a sum of £21,000.

The tutors now exerted themselves to develop the resources of the estates, and, under their care, matters soon began to prosper. They also saw to it that their ward was accorded the best education that could be procured. After attending school for some time in Edinburgh, he proceeded to the University of St. Andrews, where his society was eagerly cultivated by the neighbouring nobility, and he himself entertained on a princely scale.

For several years, after he had attained his majority, the estates continued to be held by Sir Alexander on mortgage from his principal tenants, but, after much careful organisation, he was finally able to clear himself of all pecuniary obligations. Even before that result had been achieved, the chief had been granted a royal charter for all his possessions in Sleat, Trotarnish, and in Uist. It is in reference to this occurrence that the blind piper of Reay says:

"'S ait le fearaibh an Taobhtuath,
Gu'n bhuannaich thu mar bu chòir.
Tròtarnish uile, agus Sleibht',
Uidhist nan eun, is nan ròn."

The stanza is from the poem of condolence by the piper-bard to Sir Alexander on the death of his wife, Ann Erskine, who lived only a year after her marriage.

The chief's second wife was Lady Margaret Montgomery, the accomplished daughter of the Earl of Eglinton, one of the most beautiful and cultured women of her day. Such qualities alone would have endeared her to a people endowed even with less of the romantic temperament than her vassals in Skye; but when to these virtues were added a humility of bearing and a kindliness of disposition, we need not wonder that she became the idol of all. In his "Journal," Boswell says that he had been told by Mrs

MacKinnon of Corry that such was the respect Lady Margaret enjoyed, that when she went about among her people the latter could often be seen running along the road in front of her, picking stones from off the track, "lest she should be hurt by the stumbling of her horse."

"SOITHEACH NAN DAOINE."

Now an event happened in 1739 that roused the people of the West Highlands to indignation and the greatest alarm. A party of men, acting under the leadership of Norman MacLeod of Unish, the son of the tacksman of Bernera, had been engaged in the kidnapping of young men and women, in Skye and elsewhere, with the intention of selling them as slaves in the American colonies. Anyone found alone was forcibly arrested and pressed on board their ship; so that consternation reigned in many parts of the island because of the large number of people who were going amissing, mysteriously and unaccountably. The secret leaked out by an accident. A ship laden with people, and bound for America, was wrecked off the coast of Antrim. All on board were, fortunately, saved; and they revealed what had hitherto been a problem. Many declared that Sir Alexander MacDonald had been privy to the dark business, and that he had commissioned MacLeod, and his reckless confreres, to rid the island of its surplus population by instituting this method of forcible emigration. Lady Margaret was keenly aggrieved at the insinuations levelled against her husband, and she stoutly maintained that he knew nothing whatever about the project. Despite the hints that were being thrown out, no one had come forward to incriminate Sir Alexander; so that the duty of vindicating her husband's honour in a court of justice had not been vouchsafed to Lady Margaret.

It has been suggested that it was in anticipation of the institution of an official inquiry into the whole affair that she was prompted to write to the Lord Justice Clerk of the time a letter, in which she observed: "In harvest last we were pretty much alarmed with accounts from different corners of this, and the neighbouring isles, of persons being seized and carried off aboard of a ship which put in to different places on this coast. Sir Alexander is both angry and concerned that some of his own people were taken in this manner, but could not learn who were the actors in this wicked scrape till the ship was gone."

MacLeod himself always maintained that he trafficked solely in such as were known thieves; and he never charged Sir Alexander with being accessory to the act. After his misadventure, he would not, of course, dare to return to Skye; and he resided for some time in the North of Ireland. He left that country, however, when his chief was mobilising the clan, in support of the government, during the rebellion of 1745. He was commissioned with the rank of captain, and none was so zealous as he in the pursuit of his father, who was a rebel.

After "The '45," MacLeod settled down to farming, and he became a noted breeder of Highland cattle; but, what especially commends him to fame, is the fact that it was he who was one of the pioneers in the manufacture of kelp—an industry that was to prove such a lucrative one for a generation or two in the Highlands of Scotland.

There were some in Skye who declared that MacLeod had succeeded in the shipment of a considerable number of people to America previous to the accident that befel "Soitheach nan Daoine"; and a pathetic tale is told, replete with circumstantial detail, of a wayfarer in Canada, who one day accosted a maid at a roadside house, and asked her the time of day. The question, put in English, elicited no response. Thinking she might be of French stock, the traveller asked her the same question in the language of that people; but still received no reply. He then tried her in German; but that also was of no avail. Finally he plied her with Gaelic. Instantly her face beamed with intelligence, and she quaintly answered: "Tha e àm cròdhadh chaorach mù dhà thaobh Beinn Duagraich." As the questioner happened to hail from Skye, his interest was kindled, and he asked her what she knew of Ben Duagraich. She replied by quoting a rhymed list of place-names in its neighbourhood: "Grùla, 's Brunnal, da Chnoc Scarail, Airigh nam Bó, Da chnoc nan 'O, Lag nan Aigheann, Beinn, Thotaig Ghormshuil nam fear' sgiamhach, minnim 's mo chiall Beinn Duagraich"; and the story ends by the assertion that she had been seized by the kidnappers as she was one day pulling dulse on the shore at Gesto.

Whether or not Sir Alexander had any part in the episode of "Soitheach nan Daoine" may at this time be impossible to determine; and it should be observed that he was never so concerned to absolve his name of the imputation as was his devoted wife. But, in alleviation of his behaviour in this connection, those disposed to "kindly scan their brother man" declare that far other matters engrossed his attention at this time. He was enthusiastic in the work of developing all the resources of his estates to their utmost capacity. He was a good chief, eager to do all he could for the benefit of his people; and he showed his concern for the mass of his vassals when, on several occasions, he administered stern rebuke to his tacksmen for the heavy burdens they imposed on their sub-tenants. He showed himself to be possessed of great ability and industry, and all acclaimed him for his straightforward dealings. He well deserved the encomiums bestowed on him by those who knew him well. John MacLeod of Drynoch, an intimate friend and admirer, composed a noble eulogy to him, in which he declares this chief was

"A model for the human kind;
A body faultless, and a faultless mind.

. . . . .

Great, good, and regular his every part
His form majestic, Godlike was his heart."

Another describes him as "a downright honest man, true to his friend, and firm to his word"; while the Gaelic bard, "Am Piobaire Dall," sings of his disinterested motives and his transparent honesty:

"Deagh MhacDhò'uill nan rùn réidh."

Indeed, but for the fortuitous supervention of the incident of "The '45," the fame of Sir Alexander would have gone down to history as one of the most distinguished chiefs of his clan. As it happens, all his virtues have been masked by his conduct in that affair, so that his name has come to be considered by all as a slur on his illustrious race. During his latter days members of his own clan were frankly ashamed of him; and what deeper degradation could have befallen a chief? By others he was execrated as an apostate, because of the dishonourable part he played in what they considered to have been the most glorious event in the history of the Highlands. The epitaph written for him by a Jacobite wag, and quoted in "The Lyon in Mourning," in no way exaggerates the opinion in which Sir Alexander was held at the time of his death:

> "If Heaven be pleased, when sinners cease to sin,
> If Hell be pleased, when sinners enter in,
> If earth be pleased, to quit a truckling knave,
> Then all be pleased; MacDonald's in his grave."

THE '45 REBELLION.

In view of the intense loyalty of his predecessors, it is difficult for us to-day to understand the vacillating attitude of Sir Alexander towards the cause of the Prince. There were, of course, strong reasons why he should not have joined the rebellion. There was the seeming hopelessness of the adventure, the strong influence of President Forbes, the persuasive power of MacLeod, and the risk he would run of losing his estates, for which he had so recently acquired title-deeds; but with the possible exception of his father, Sir James, any one of his immediate ancestors would have thrown all these prudent considerations to the four winds, and would unhesitatingly have declared for the cause of Prince Charlie. He himself was a Jacobite at heart; his wife, Lady Margaret, a strong, though secret, supporter of the cause; while staunch clansmen, like Donald Roy MacDonald, MacDonald of Kingsborough, and Hugh MacDonald of Castleton, would sacrifice much on behalf of the "Young Pretender." Indeed, there was only one man, of all the cadets of the House of Sleat, who can be said to have been truly a Hanoverian, and that was Allan MacDonald of Knock, the captor of Prince Charlie's guide, Donald MacLeod of Galtrigil.

The rank and file of the clan were enthusiastic for the Prince. Writing to Forbes of Culloden, Sir Alexander says: "The men are as devoted to the young gentleman (Prince Charlie) as their wives, and their daughters, are." He had very good reasons for making that assertion; for, when he called out the clan, and reviewed them at Portree, we have it on the declaration of Hugh MacDonald of Baleshare, as given in "The Lyon in Mourning," that "the people denied rising in arms if Sir Alexander did not go and join the Prince; upon which the people all dispersed. I told Sir Alexander I was vexed at the disobedience shown by the people to their chief. He told me to keep silence. It was all by his private orders, as it did not lay in his way to do him (the Prince) good, he had no inclination to do him hurt"; and this affirmation is amplified by a statement in an interesting MS. by Sir John MacGregor Murray of Lanrick, a portion of which has been published by Rev. Dr. Lauchlan MacLean Watt, in which we find: "When Sir Alexander had resolved not to join the Prince, he desired Kingsborough, then his factor, to speak to the people, of whom 400 had assembled, to advise them not to go to the Prince. Kingsborough made no impression on the MacDonalds, who exclaimed they would join the Prince. One of the gentlemen, Iain MacAlister Bhàin of Peinfeiler, asked Kingsborough if he would not go with his own company; and, on his answering in the negative, that gentleman insulted him with a slap in the face, reproaching him with being unmanly and unlike his predecessors. The factor then returned to Sir Alexander, told him he could not prevail on the people, and had even been insulted for the proposition. Sir Alexander then went out, conversed with the gentlemen and the people who were assembled, and asked them whether they would not remain with him to defend the country, or follow the Prince. They all exclaimed that they would join the Prince, observing that he had also promised to do so, and that to fail would be dishonourable. He desired such as were with him to separate from those who were resolved to join the Prince. None of them separated, but stood firm with the Prince. Sir Alexander then said that, if they deserted him, the country would be exposed very soon to fire and plunder by the king's troops, and that the family of MacDonald, as well as their own, would be ruined. Upon which they repeated that the discredit would be his own if he flinched, but that, if he was resolved, they would follow him to the devil."

The spirit of the people towards the rebellion may be illustrated by another incident. On the retreat of the Highland army from England, Donald Roy MacDonald was despatched once more to solicit Sir Alexander and MacLeod to join the Jacobites. The emissary spent three days, on his return from Skye, at Kyleakin, where his brother, Hugh MacDonald of Baleshare, was stationed as captain in the Royalist Militia; and with him and his men Donald Roy made merry. "eating plenteously of King George's beef and provisions with the white cockade in his bonnet, his several friends of the militia heartily wishing and drinking success to the Prince's cause."

In the maze of the wildly conflictory pronouncements (often the creations of intensely biassed minds) that have been made regarding the real attitude of Sir Alexander to the rebellion, certain facts emerge that make it reasonable to conclude that he had been enthusiastic enough in support of the project of rising with the Prince, but that his zeal was severely damped when he discovered that the latter had not brought with him a following commensurate with the undertaking. Thus, when a letter, written by Sir Alexander to Lord President Forbes, and intercepted by the Jacobites, was shown to the Prince, it is said that he evinced great disappointment, and that he declared "it was on their advice he came, as their letters would show." In that reliable account of the Rebellion, "The Lyon in Mourning," there is an asseveration by Captain Malcolm MacLeod of Raasay to the effect that Sir Alexander MacDonald had apprised MacDonald of Boisdale of the Prince's intention to come to the Highlands, and that, as the first landing was to be made on the lands of Boisdale, the latter was to advise the Prince to return immediately to France, if he had not a large following; and await a more favourable opportunity.

In the same compilation there is another statement by Captain Malcolm respecting a conference held in "a publick-house in Sconsary," at which Sir Alexander, Kingsborough, MacLeod of Raasay, and Captain Malcolm were present. A man from Glenelg had come with news of Gladesmuir (Prestonpans), and "Sir Alexander was so impressed, he doubted not now of the Prince's succeeding in his attempt, and that therefore every one should raise men to assist him." Sir Alexander is reported to have observed to Raasay: " 'Tis true you cannot raise many men, but those you have are good. You can easily raise 100, and I resolve to have 900, making a good 1000 stout fellows betwixt us." Captain Malcolm goes on to say Sir Alexander expressed his intention of dividing this force into two battalions, making Raasay colonel of 500 men. The latter were to proceed to join the rebellion as soon as possible after the necessary preparations had been completed, while Sir Alexander was to follow with his detachment a day's march behind him. Detailed arrangements were made for the setting out, even to the number of cattle they were to take with them as part of the commissariat, "till they should come to the Low Country, where they would get plenty." They spent the night at the inn, and were a merry company.

Next morning, however, it was noticed that the disposition of the Chief of the MacDonalds had undergone a pronounced change. A courier had arrived bearing letters, one from Forbes and another from MacLeod, who was then in Inverness. "Sir Alexander went aside to read them, and he left the inn." Captain Malcolm asked Kingsborough if he could account for the sudden departure of the chief, and his change of demeanour. Kingsborough answered that he could only surmise that his chief had changed his mind about the project to join the Prince. There can be no doubt that it was Forbes and MacLeod who were instrumental in determining Sir Alexander's subsequent course of action in regard to the rebellion. His defection gave grave disappointment to those who were zealous in the Jacobite cause, and occasioned John Roy Stuart, the bard, to lament:

"A chlann Dhòmhnuill mo ghaoil,
Da'm bu shuaicheantas fraoch,
Mo chreach uile nach d' fhaod
Sibh éirigh."

And the same tale may be related of the MacLeods. While the semple of the clan were unanimously for the Prince, and the great majority of the gentle were similarly minded, the chief actually fought on the side of the Royalists, though he was on principle a Jacobite. When one of the cadets of the House of MacLeod, Donald of Bernera, the "Old Trojan," as he has been called, was ordered by his chief to bring his men to Dunvegan, he readily complied with the request; and, presenting his company, he thus addressed the chief: "I place at your disposal the twenty men of your tribe who are under my immediate command, and in any other quarrel I would not fail to be at their head, but in the present juncture I must go where a more imperious duty calls me"; and with that he joined the Highland army. It is said that MacDonald of Heisker, in North Uist, acted in the same manner towards Sir Alexander MacDonald, when the latter had decided to throw in his lot with the government.

It is reasonable to conclude, from the assertions so often made in affirmation of it, that very few of the rank and file of the MacLeods would have been prevailed upon to leave Skye but for the fact that they had been deluded into the belief that they were going to fight for Prince Charlie. "It is well known," declares Bishop Forbes, in "The Lyon in Mourning," "that the Laird of

MacLeod used this dissembling art, to raise his own men, in so much that the MacLeods had white cockades in their bonnets at their rising; and in passing from Skye to the continent (mainland), which I, Robert Forbes, have had affirmed to me by several persons from Skye who had access to know this affair well."

There are some, indeed, who aver that MacLeod's eldest son had actually set off from Skye at the head of his clan, with the intention of joining the Prince, but that on the way he had been prevailed upon to reconsider the position, and so abandoned the enterprise. In a letter by his factor to John Grant of Grant, in October, 1745, is a statement to the effect that Lovat called MacLeod a "perjured villain," for his failure to supplement a solemn oath he had given at Castle Dounie, that he would hasten home, mobilise his men, and join the Master of Lovat at the Pass of Corryarich.

And just as the charge has been made that Sir Alexander MacDonald had encouraged the Prince to come to Scotland, and that he deserted him when he did arrive, and even joined his enemies, a similar imputation has been made against MacLeod; for MacKenzie, "The Clans' Historian," has left it on record that "Miss MacLeod of MacLeod remembers having seen in the family chest a correspondence, which has since disappeared, showing, without doubt, that MacLeod had encouraged Charlie to come over."

Notwithstanding, it was MacLeod who, on the 2nd of August, conveyed to the government the first intimation of the arrival of the Prince. Prudent considerations undoubtedly constrained him to act in that way, when he heard that the Prince had but one ship, "mounting sixteen or eighteen guns"; and only "about thirty Irish, or French, officers." As M.P. for the County of Inverness, he felt it was his duty to give intelligence of the insurrection, and he exerted himself to prevent his own men from joining the outbreak. On 17th August, 1745, he wrote a letter to President Forbes from Sconser, as he was on his way "in great haste" to his property in Glenelg, in order to dissuade his people there "from being prevailed upon by their neighbours to join the Prince."

Prince Charles despatched an emissary to MacLeod, as he had to MacDonald, soliciting his aid; and that fact probably explains the letter MacLeod sent Forbes, and in which he says:

"We not only gave no countenance to these people, but we use all the interest we have with our neighbours to follow the same prudent method; and we are persuaded we have done it with such success that not one man of any consequence north of the Grampians will give any sort of assistance to this mad, rebellious attempt. How far you think we have acted properly I shall long to know; but of this I am certain, we did it as our duty, and for the best; for, in the present situation in Europe, I should be very sorry to see anything like disaffection to the government appear, though ever so trivial. Sir Alexander is here, and has seen this scrawl."

Shortly afterwards Forbes wrote Sir Alexander, advising him that either he or MacLeod should proceed to Inverness with as large a force as they could muster; while the other was to remain in Skye, in order to suppress any risings in the island, and "to keep proper countenance in the country."

The chiefs of Skye were quite prepared to obey this command; but they declared they were woefully lacking in equipment. MacLeod describes the situation thus: "Sir Alexander and I can easily raise from 1500 to 2000 men for the king's service; but we require arms, else 1800 staves, with about 200 swords, would make but a foolish picture."

It is not known whether the necessary arms were forthcoming or not; but, in any case, the MacLeods were marshalled on Lag Buidhe, at the head of Loch Caroy, about the end of October. The detachment consisted of between 400 and 500 men; with their piper, Donald Bàn MacCrimmon, at their head, they made for Kyleakin. Tradition has it that the piper was far from easy, probably because he knew that the true purpose of the expedition was not to join the Prince, but to oppose him. He was very depressed, and fears began to develop in his mind that he would never return. In accordance with the superstition of the age, the story goes, he went to consult a witch, who lived hard by, in order to ascertain his chances in the campaign. This was on the morning of the day they were to set out.

The banshee informed him that everything would depend on the attitude of his wife towards him before the expedition started. If she helped cheerfully, and of her own accord, then all would go well; but, should she display no anxiety to attend to his needs, disaster was sure to be his portion. Now the condition would be impaired if he were compelled to ask her for anything. All he was to do was to show he was preparing to leave home on an important enterprise.

In a state of intense anxiety he went home, wondering how it would fare with him; for his wife's aversion to work was known far and near; and she earned the censure of all her neighbours by her habitual neglect of her respected husband. When he entered the house, he found her, as usual, lying down on a bench, with the room untidy and the fire unkindled. She took no notice of him as he bustled about, making as much stir as he possibly could to attract her attention. The time for his departure was drawing distressingly near. Yet she had not bestirred herself! He was all the time in deep meditation as to the most effective way of bringing his desires to her notice. He would take up his pipes, try to tune them, and lay them down again, only to repeat the operation. His hose required adjustment; his brogues seemed to give him no end of trouble! With much ado, he would take them off; with ostentation quite as great, he would fasten them on again. Still the condition so fateful for him seemed to be no nearer its fulfilment. At last the tumult outside announced the hour of departure! As a final effort to rouse his lethargic spouse he undid one of his brogues, and threw it down on the floor with much clatter; but this also failed to produce the desired result. He tied it on again, and, with a heavy heart, lifted up his pipes. As he crossed the threshold he gave utterance to the saying that has since become a proverb: "Cha ghluais bròg, no bruidhinn, droch bhean tighe."

It is with him, also, that the island tradition associates the ballad called "MacCrimmon's Lament," the assertion being that, as he marched at the head of the clan on the way to the mainland, he composed the soul-subduing lament extempore: and so deftly did he play, that the pipes seemed to enunciate the words:

"Mo chùl, mo chùl, mo chùl ri tilleadh
Mo chùl ris an Dùn gun mo dhùil ri tilleadh."

The melody of this haunting strain, so often on the lips of sorrowing emigrants during the subsequent century, was first published in "Mackay's Collection of Pipe Music"; and it was afterwards made more widely known when the words appeared in the pages of "Cuairtear nan Gleann," when that paper was under the editorship of Rev. Dr. Norman MacLeod, "Caraid nan Gaidheal"; some have attributed their composition to that famous author himself.

The contingent of the MacLeods arrived at Inverness about the middle of November, when they were immediately commanded to proceed to the region of Moray, in order to check the exactions that were there being raised on behalf of Prince Charlie. They formed part of the force that, on the 20th of December, encountered a superior body of Jacobites, under Lord Lewis Gordon, at the village of Inverury. The skirmish lasted but a few minutes; but that was ample time in which to drive the Islesmen from their position, whence they were pursued in utter confusion beyond the Spey. In the rollicking Jacobite ballad, "MacLeod's Defeat at Inverury," the denouement is thus described:

> "MacLeod that nicht got sic a fricht,
> Rade aff ere brak o' day, man.
> He lost his bridle in the fecht,
> Rade aff wi' ane o' strae, man."

Large numbers of the MacLeods then deserted, going home to Skye; but it is said that about 150 of them were later brought back to Inverness by MacLeod of Talisker. The rest were rallied, and were amalgamated with the force that held Inverness for a time under the Earl of Loudon. They were involved with that army, which also included a considerable body of the MacDonalds of Skye, in the famous "Rout of Moy."

On the evening of Sunday, the 16th of February, Loudon planned an attack on Moyhall, where the Prince's headquarters then were; and great precautions were taken to prevent knowledge of the intended coup from getting abroad. A cordon of soldiers was drawn round the town, and none was to be allowed to pass through on any condition. Despite these measures, a messenger was despatched, it is said, by Macintosh himself, who was an officer with Loudon, in order to warn the Jacobites; and he succeeded in the attempt.

Preparations were immediately made by the Prince to repel the attack, the duty of providing outposts being allotted to the men of Clan Ranald, among whom were the MacLeods of Raasay. A smith named Fraser and four men went along the road from

Moy in order to reconnoitre; when they were about two miles from the castle they heard the Royalists approaching. In the pitch darkness orders were given by the dauntless blacksmith to imaginary clans, and shots were fired. The Dunvegan men formed the van of Loudon's army; and, it is said that, fearing, or feigning that an ambush had been laid, they were seized with panic, and retreated helter-skelter towards the town of Inverness. The first shot, some say the only one, fired by "the merry men of Moy Castle," killed the piper of the MacLeods, Donald Bàn MacCrimmon.

On the following Tuesday the Prince's army marched on Inverness. At its approach the Royalist forces vacated the town, and made for the North. They were pursued by the Earl of Cromarty into Sutherland, where they were dispersed. The MacLeods, whose heart was never in the affair, readily availed themselves of the opportunity to cease opposing the Prince, and made for Skye, whither the chief followed them, with Loudon and President Forbes in his company.

Soon afterwards the fate of the Stuart cause was decided on the field of Culloden. The scattered remnants of the Highland army, broken in spirit and in headlong flight, made promiscuously for the mountain fastnesses of the West. Terrible hardships were endured by these gallant men, and every ruse was adopted in order to avoid capture. Their sense of despair, and the poignancy of their sufferings, are epitomised by the bard, John Roy Stuart, who himself played such a notable part in the rising:

"Tha ar cinn fo na choille,
'S fheudar gleanntan is beanntan thoirt oirnn;
Sinn gun sùgradh, gun mhacnus,
Gun aoibhneas, gun aiteas, gun cheòl,
Air bheag bidhe no teine,
Air na stùcann mu'n laigheadh an ceò,
Sinn mar chomhachaig eile,
'G eisdeachd ri deireas gach lò."

With the wanderings of Prince Charlie on the mainland, and subsequently in the Long Island, we are not here concerned. But there are two persons connected with Skye who played such a prominent part in association with him in these places, and have in consequence acquired such fame in history, that it is necessary, at this stage, to give a brief sketch of their lives. They were Donald MacLeod and Flora MacDonald.

Donald MacLeod,

the "Faithful Palinurus," as he was called by Walkingshaw, the patron of the condemned Jacobites during their sojourn in London, was a tacksman, in fairly comfortable circumstances, in Galtrigil, and a trader of note in his day. He happened to be in Inverness, whither he had gone for a cargo of meal, when his clan was stationed there after the debacle of Inverury. Urgent appeals were frequently made to him by his chief to show his loyalty to his clan and to the government; but Donald stoutly refused to be swayed from his resolve. It says much for his sense of independence that he should thus have defied tradition, which held the clan spirit in such reverent awe. If he did, at times, think that obedience to his chief should have been his first consideration, though there is no evidence of that, the events that now supervened left no room in his mind for uncertainty. The Jacobite army had entered Inverness in triumph, and the Royalist forces were retreating abjectly to the north, after the Rout of Moy. It appears that Donald joined in the celebrations that followed, and he thus became acquainted with some of the Jacobite officers. Owing to his wide experience, as a trader among the Western Isles, he was commissioned by the Prince and his council to convey one, Aeneas MacDonald of Kinlochmoidart, to Barra, in order to bring to the mainland a sum of £380 in gold that had been lodged there for safety. The adventure was successful, in spite of many difficulties, and the money was safely deposited in the district of Moidart.

A few days after the disaster of Culloden, the Prince met Donald at Borrodale, on Loch nan Uamh, in Arisaig, and he asked him to proceed to Skye with letters to his chief and to Sir Alexander MacDonald. Donald reasoned against the practicability of such a project; and he succeeded in convincing the Prince of its futility. Thereupon the latter asked to be taken to the Long Island, throwing himself unreservedly on Donald's responsibility. An eight-oared boat was procured, one of the crew being Donald's young son, Murdoch, who had been attending school in Inverness, but whose ardour for the Jacobite cause had led him to quit his books; and, although he was only 15 years of age, he had joined the Highland army, and had fought on Culloden. This brave youth followed the general trend of the fugitives towards the west, and had arrived at Borrodale in time to accompany the Prince across the Minch.

It was a wild night, with thunder and rain, when, in deep darkness, the Prince and his party left the Scottish mainland. Donald was a man of 68 years of age; but such was his skill and daring as a seaman, that, notwithstanding the very adverse weather they encountered, those on board had implicit faith in the man at the helm. After enduring much hardship, they effected a landing at Rossinish on the following morning, and Donald was immediately commanded to proceed in advance to Stornoway, in order to procure a boat there that would take the Prince to France. With his customary devotion, Donald set off; but his mission was thwarted by the action of two ministers of the name of MacAulay, father and son, who advised another member of the clergy, the Rev. Coll Mackenzie, to incite the people against the Prince by the allegation that he was approaching the town with a strong force, in order to put the inhabitants under tribute, and to seize a ship forcibly to take him to France.

The people of Stornoway were thus roused to such antagonism to his venture, that Donald was forced to leave the town. He rejoined the Prince's party once more, and, in their own boat, they retraced their course to South Uist. On the way they were beset with constant danger; for the ships of the government were everywhere in the Minch. Twice they were sighted, and on one occasion followed for some nine miles; but by skilful manœuvring and hard rowing they succeeded in eluding their pursuers.

After the fugitives had been consigned to temporary safety in the house of Neil MacEachan, a tacksman in lone Glen Corrodale, Donald was commissioned to proceed on another adventure; this time to Loch Arkaig, where Lochiel and other Jacobite leaders were in hiding, in order to bring back some of the gold that had been hoarded there, and also a supply of brandy—stuff that was then becoming a first necessity with the Prince. Again Donald was successful in his perilous enterprise; the Prince's spirits were high, though it was becoming daily clearer that they must evacuate the Long Island if they were to evade capture.

Through the loyalty of Hugh MacDonald of Armadale, who was an officer in the Skye Militia, passports were supplied to Flora MacDonald and Charlie for proceeding to Skye. It was considered unwise that Donald should form one of the escort; and at Loch

Boisdale he parted with his Prince, who had been under his care from the 21st of April until the 21st of June—a period that must have been one of intense anxiety to a person of such deep loyalty and lofty sense of duty as Donald MacLeod.

A thorough combing out of the Long Island was now initiated by the Militia; and, a fortnight after his parting with the Prince, Donald was captured in Benbecula by a fellow Skyeman, Lieut. Allan MacDonald of Knock in Sleat. This man has the questionable distinction of having been the only cadet of his house who was whole-hearterly a Hanoverian; and he has left behind him a reputation that, for cruelty and mean dealing, places him very low among the many dastards of that unhappy time.

As General Campbell, the chief officer commanding in the Western Isles, was then supposed to be in Barra, Donald was sent thither to be tried. It was, however, discovered that the General had proceeded to Skye, and Donald was sent there after him. At Portree he was joined by other captives, chief of whom was Captain Malcolm MacLeod, the nephew of "Raasay." It was ascertained that the government ship, "The Furnace," commanded by the notorious Captain Ferguson, lay in Applecross Bay at that time, whither the prisoners were despatched. A court was immediately convened, presided over by the gentlemanly General Campbell. During the inquiry the General observed that Donald might have secured £30,000 if he had acted wisely and betrayed the Prince. The retort made by Donald is so characteristic of this gallant and true-hearted son of Skye that it is worthy of being quoted in full: "£30,000! Though I had got it, I could not have enjoyed it eight and forty hours. This conscience of mine would have got up upon me, and that money would not have kept it down. Though I had got all England and Scotland for my pains, I would not have allowed a hair of his body to be touched, if I could help it."

"The Furnace" cruised about the Western Isles for several weeks, and the poor prisoners suffered extreme privations. There was no attempt at sanitation, the food was scanty and inferior, and their clothes were worn to rags. Ten long months he endured these hardships in the prison ships, and his health was being sorely tried. Yet such was the magnanimity of his nature, that on no occasion did he show any bitterness towards his tormentors.

"God forgive them," he used to say, "but God let them never die till we have them in the same condition that they had us, and we are sure we would not have them treated as they treated us."

He was released on the 10th of July, 1747, and arrived home in Skye about the middle of October. His health was broken owing to the ill-treatment he had received; but what aggrieved him most of all was the manner in which he was despised by his chief. The latter slighted him, "because it was thought that that was the proper way to be popular with the government."

Donald did not long enjoy his freedom. He died at Galtrigil on the 8th of September, 1749. His name will be remembered with pardonable pride so long as loyalty, fortitude, and a disinterested regard for those in distress awaken the admiration of mankind; for his was a noble role, in what Lord Rosebery once called "the last burst of chivalry."

FLORA MACDONALD.

The other person associated with the Prince in this episode of his life was Flora MacDonald. Although she cannot be claimed as a native of Skye, so much of her romantic career was run in that island that it is necessary to include a brief biography of her also.

She was the daughter of Ranald MacDonald of Milton, South Uist, where she was born in 1722. When she was but a child, her father died, and her mother married again, this time a notable scion of the House of Sleat, Hugh MacDonald of Castleton, one who is reputed to have been the strongest man of his time in Skye.

Flora was brought up in Skye, and was educated in the local school in Sleat. She was a prime favourite with Sir Alexander and Lady Margaret MacDonald, at whose mansion in Mogstadt she was often a guest. The chief and his wife showed such deep interest in her, that they sent her to a school in Edinburgh for a period of three years; and it is interesting to mention that one of her fellow-pupils was her future husband, Allan MacDonald of Kingsborough, who also was there under the patronage of his chief, Sir Alexander.

Flora developed into a lady of great versatility and resourcefulness. She was a good English scholar, an accomplished musician; but what attracted her especially to her acquaintances was her engaging personality; for she had "great sprightliness in looks, abounded with good sense, and modesty, gentleness, and humanity." In "The Lyon in Mourning," her personal appearance and her manners are thus naively described by Bishop Forbes: "Of low stature, of fair complexion, and well enough shaped; and no lady, Edinburgh-bred, can acquit herself better at the tea-table than she did in Leith Road"; and, among others who have left interesting accounts of her, Boswell refers to her in his "Journal" as "a little woman of genteel appearance, uncommonly mild and well-bred."

Just when the pursuit of the Prince was becoming keenest, Flora MacDonald had occasion to go to Uist, ostensibly to pay a visit to her brother, who was tacksman at Milton; but probably, as the agent of Lady Margaret, to aid in the escape of the Prince. For weeks previously, Lady Margaret had been unwearied in her efforts to obtain information, and to acquaint the Prince's friends of the movements and the intentions of the enemy's forces. This was an easy, albeit a hazardous matter for her, as her house at Mogstadt was the daily rendezvous of the officers of the crown. Her help was so much appreciated by the Prince that he sent her a special letter of thanks, with the enjoinment that it was to be burned immediately after perusal. Lady Margaret, however, treasured the royal epistle, despite its serious implications, with such regard, that she resolved to preserve it as an heirloom; but she was ultimately persuaded, on the urgent representations of Donald Roy MacDonald, and other friends, to destroy it when news came of Captain Ferguson's arrival at Mogstadt.

Simultaneously with Flora's departure from Skye, Lady Margaret sent a communication to Uist, acquainting those in league with her there, namely, Hugh MacDonald of Baleshare and his namesake of Armadale, that a minute searching of the Long Island was contemplated by the troops of the government.

Meanwhile, things were stirring in the Island of Skye. Rumours were abroad that, as the pursuit in the Outer Isles was becoming too close for him, the Prince and his party were planning a flight to Skye. Every vantage point along the western shores of that island was occupied by troops in order to intercept the royal fugitive; and these activities on the part of his enemies kindled feelings of harassing solicitude in the minds of those who had the safety of the Prince at heart.

Lady Margaret, together with her faithful ally, Donald Roy MacDonald, had been making extensive preparations to receive the Prince on his coming to Skye. Her agent was untiring in his efforts to elicit information about the movements of the Hanoverian troops. This hero was the son of Ronald MacDonald, a natural son of Sir James Mór, Baronet of Sleat. He had been wounded in the foot on Culloden; but he had managed to hirple home to Skye, practically on one leg, enduring great agony the while. Owing to neglect, the wound festered; yet he was seldom at rest, being constantly on the move as Lady Margaret's emissary on behalf of the Prince.

Towards the end of June, it was anticipated that the Prince might arrive in Skye at any moment. It was thought that he would betake himself to Fladda Chuain, an island to the north of Trotarnish, then occupied by a single tenant. Thither it was proposed that Donald Roy should go, in order to receive him. Every precaution was taken to prevent anyone from ascertaining the purpose of this outing; and the principal movers in it gave it out that Donald was going to the island to fish, and also to procure shells for the making of lime. As he meant to pass a few days on the island a considerable stock of provisions was taken, together with a bundle of "six shirts belonging to her husband, and a sum of twenty guineas, sent by Lady Margaret for the use of the Prince."

Donald Roy remained on the island for a whole day and night, vainly awaiting the arrival of Prince Charlie. Losing patience, and concluding that the latter might have repaired to Bord Cruinn, Donald Roy proceeded to that rocky islet of powerful currents and difficult approach. As he did not wish the oarsmen to land, in case the Prince and his party were concealed in the ruin on the top of the island, Donald effected a landing alone by jumping out of the boat on to a ledge, whence, in spite of his injured foot, he climbed to the highest point; but, finding no one there, he returned to the mainland, and paid a visit to Dr. John MacLean, the chief's physician, who then occupied Shulista.

During these events in Skye, Flora MacDonald met Captain O'Neill, one of the Prince's retinue, "by a lucky accident," as is the account of it in "The Lyon in Mourning," "and he got her to promise to take Prince Charlie to Skye."

While preparations for the flight were proceeding, Flora was one day on her way to visit the Lady of Clanronald, when she was apprehended by members of the Militia. She protested against such interference, and demanded to be brought before their commanding officer. After much hesitation, her wish was granted, and she was ushered into the presence of her step-father!

Whether MacDonald knew of the projected adventure or not has never been divulged; though General Campbell, on more than one occasion, accused him of cozenage in the escape of the Prince. The fact remains, he supplied Flora and a young student, named Neil MacEachain, with passports for Skye, while another was drawn up for one, "Betty Burke," who was alleged to be her maid. In a letter which he despatched by Flora to his wife, MacDonald wrote: "I have sent your daughter from this country, lest she should in any way be frightened with the troops lying here. She has got one, Betty Burke, an Irish girl, who, as she tells me, is a grand spinster. If her spinning pleases you, you may keep her till she spins all your lint, or, if you have any wool to spin, you may employ her."

Armed with the visas, the party made for Rossinish, in Benbecula, where an open boat was procured, and a crew of five to man her.

It was a clear and calm evening when, about 8 p.m. on Saturday, the 28th of June, the fugitives put to sea. They had only been an hour afloat when a freshening westerly wind developed into a tempest, and heavy rain began to fall. Contrary to the assertion in the popular ballad, it was Flora who slept, while the Prince sang songs "over the sea to Skye."

They rowed on all night, and early next morning, as they were approaching the Point of Waternish, it was proposed to land in order to rest the oarsmen. On drawing closer to the shore, however, it was noticed that it was occupied by soldiers, and they rowed off as fast as they could. They were fired upon, but no one was hit; and, after they had rounded the promontory, they sought safety in a creek nearby; for ships-of-war were then in sight.

There they hid for a short time, and partook of food and much-needed rest. As delay was dangerous, they resumed their journey; and shortly after noon, on Sunday, 29th June, they landed at a point called Allt a' Chuain, about half a mile to the south-west of Mogstadt House. Thither Flora proceeded with MacEachan, leaving the Prince to conceal himself as best he could among the rocks of the shore.

When she arrived at Mogstadt, a party of soldiers was idling without, while some officers were inside dining with Lady Margaret. Among the latter were General Campbell and Captain John MacLeod of Balmeanach. Flora accepted the invitation to sit down with the company; and she soon found she had to exercise all the wit, and all the resource she possessed, in order to parry the very pointed questions that were addressed to her. "She afterwards," Boswell says, "often laughed in good humour with these gentlemen on her having so well deceived them."

Notwithstanding the difficulty of the situation, she succeeded in informing Lady Margaret of the circumstances, and the latter lost no time in coming to a decision. She sent MacDonald of Kingsborough, Sir Alexander's factor, who chanced that day to be at Mogstadt, to the Prince with victuals, and to acquaint him with the plans that had been concerted for his safety. After searching about for some considerable time, Kingsborough succeeded in locating the Prince, to whom he communicated the designs of his friends. These were that he was to spend the night in Kingsborough House, and proceed next day to the Island of Raasay, which was then free of the soldiers of the government.

In the late afternoon the Prince and Kingsborough set off for the south on foot. The old road which they followed may still be traced, particularly at Cuidreach, and beyond Glen Hinnisdale, where, at Lòn Ruadh, slightly to the west of the present highway, a "Tobar a' Phrionnsa," or Prince's Well, is still pointed out.

It was about eleven o'clock at night when the party arrived, to spring a great surprise on the household at Kingsborough; for, it is said, the ladies of that establishment were intensely curious as to the identity of the raw-boned female, with the uncouth gait, who accompanied their father. Mrs MacDonald alone was brought into the secret; and, after partaking of her good cheer, the happy company, among whom were Flora and MacEachan, repaired to rest for the night.

Next morning, preparations were made for continuing the journey; but great difficulty was experienced in rousing the Prince from "a most refreshing sleep." And the utmost haste was now necessary, for, as Mrs MacDonald of Kingsborough had conjectured, the crew that ferried the royal party across the Minch was arrested immediately on its return, and forced to confess all.

After his experience of the Prince's deportment in female garb on the previous day, when he had on several occasions mildly to remind him that it was necessary for his safety to observe the feminine conventions with greater care ('s tu dh'fhàs mi-bhanail bho'n uiridh), Kingsborough concluded that it would be prudent to dress his charge in male attire. In a MS., said to have been written by Neil MacEachan himself, and published in "The New Monthly Magazine" in 1840, there appears a statement to the effect that people going home from church watched Kingsborough and his companion. It proceeds: "They continued to speak of the ignorance and the assurance of Miss Burke, who was not ashamed to walk and keep company with Kingsborough. But what they most took notice of was, when Kingsborough and his companion came to a rivulet, about knee-deep, which crossed the high road, to see Burke take up her petticoats so high when she entered the water. The poor fellows were quite confounded at this last sight!"

Though the Prince, as Kingsborough puts it, "was very bad at acting the part of dissembler," it was deemed essential that he should leave the house in the clothes in which he had come, lest the suspicion of the servants should be aroused. This was done; and in a wood, a short distance from Kingsborough House, the Prince donned a suit belonging to his protector, from whom he parted here; and, in the company of Neil MacEachain and a boy, named MacQueen, who acted as guide, the party proceeded to Portree. Past Eyre, Annishader, Borve, and Drumuie, they went; and, in the evening, they arrived at MacNab's Inn, now the Royal Hotel, in Portree. There they were joined by Flora MacDonald; and, after feelingly bidding each other farewell, the heroine parted with her Prince, and, with Neil MacEachain, set off to her home in Armadale, where we shall meanwhile leave her, while we follow the Prince in his itinerary in Raasay and in Skye.

While the party was resting in the inn, Donald Roy MacDonald was active in his preparations for taking the Prince to Raasay. He discovered that young Mac'ille Chalum, the heir of Raasay, was then at Totterome; for all the houses on his island had been burned down; and he had gone to live with a sister who was married to MacQueen, the tacksman of that part of Scorrybreck.

Having apprised "Raasay" of the adventure, and enlisted his support, Donald Roy hastened back to Portree, where he rejoined the Prince.

In the meantime, young "Raasay" was not idle. He managed to drag a boat from Loch Leathan, one of the lochs of Storr, down the steep declivity to the shore at Berreraig; and in this crazy cobble he rowed across the sound to Raasay. There he procured a larger boat, one of the two on his island that had been saved from the general destruction; and with Dr. Murdo, his brother, Captain Malcolm, his cousin, and two others, namely, John Mackenzie, who had been a sergeant in the Jacobite army, and a Donald MacFriar, they put to sea, and sailed to Portree Loch.

In the early hours of the morning of Tuesday, 1st July, they brought the boat round to a place called Sgeir Mhór, where the Prince embarked; and they made for a rocky and secluded cove immediately below the district of Glam, in Raasay.

In a shepherd's shieling, so low that they could scarce sit upright in it, these five devoted men tried to make their Prince as comfortable as they could. Great difficulty was experienced in procuring food, and they had to exercise the extremest caution lest the natives should apprehend any unusual occurrence. Young "Raasay" went in search of victuals; and we are told "he brought back a kid in the fold of his plaid."

That day the sentries noticed a stranger on the track that led past their hut. A council was at once convened, and all, except the Prince, advocated the shooting of the man there and then. He alone opposed such action, remarking: "God forbid that we should take any poor man's life while we can save our own." John Mackenzie, who was keeping watch at the door, overheard the royal observation, and he muttered in Gaelic: "Feumar an gùnna a chur ris. Ged is esan an rìgh, is sinne a' chomhairle, agus is e an ni a their sinne, is còir a dheanamh." (John was a thorough-going Parliamentarian as well as a good Jacobite.)

Luckily, the man passed the hut unconcernedly, and it was afterwards discovered that he was one of the fugitives of the Highland army lurking in Raasay, and posing the while as a vendor of tobacco.

Before he left Portree, the Prince had secretly arranged with Donald Roy MacDonald to meet him on the following Sunday in Braes, in the house of a certain Peter MacQueen in Camustinivaig. In the interval, however, he had changed his plans; for on Wednesday morning he intimated that he was anxious to leave Raasay, in order to consult with "Donald Roy MacDonald in Trotternish." He was so firmly fixed in his resolution, that it was seen to be futile to oppose him; and, about 7 p.m. on Wednesday, 2nd July, they left Raasay and made for Scorrybreck.

A gale from the north was blowing at the time, and so fierce did it become that all except the Prince wanted to return to Glam. He urged them to proceed, and, on the way, he whiled the time "by singing Highland songs"; for he had by this time acquired a smattering of the Gaelic language.

Between 9 and 10 o'clock at night, they landed near Nicolson's Rock, in Scorrybreck, at a place called Lag na Bàthaich, where they sought the shelter of a cowhouse, "situated about two miles from Scorrybreck House." Though drenched to the skin, the Prince was in good humour on the way. When Malcolm MacLeod requested to be allowed to carry part of the Prince's luggage, the latter seemed piqued at the implication of fatigue, for he remarked he should be as fit as any in the company to carry his own equipage. When they arrived at the byre, they partook of food, consisting of "a little bread and cheese." The Prince then sent Raasay's heir in quest of Donald Roy MacDonald, a man in whom he had the most implicit faith.

He had slept but little during that night; and next morning he seemed to be in a very unsettled state of mind. It was early apparent to Captain Malcolm MacLeod, who was then his sole guardian, that he was projecting another move; but its purport had not been broached. Having matured his plans, it is said that "he lifted up his baggage and walked out of the byre at 7 o'clock that evening, telling Malcolm to guide him to the district of Strathaird." The latter was greatly perturbed at this request, for he was aware that a contingent of the Militia was then stationed at the head of Loch Sligachan, and "he was most anxious that nothing should befal the Prince in his company." When Malcolm observed there was great danger in the undertaking, the Prince replied: "There is nothing now to be done without danger." Seeing the Prince was resolved, Malcolm suggested, as the safer course, that they should go by sea. This proposal was also waived; and they made for the south by land.

It was decided that the Prince was to travel as Malcolm's servant, and that he was to assume the name of "Lewie Caw," after a Jacobite student who was then known to be hiding in Skye, "where he had some relations." As they went on their way, it was arranged that the Prince was to act the part of servant with circumspection; that if anyone should be met on the way he was to stand aside, as became one in his station, and feign a lack of interest in whatever conversation should take place.

Through Glen Vargill they trudged, the Prince a splendid walker; for, as he told Malcolm, he had prepared himself on the continent for the hardships of rough campaigning by going long distances barefooted. On the way they discussed many things. The conduct of Lord George Murray was subjected to criticism; the Prince going so far as to suggest that he suspected him of treachery; for, as he told Malcolm, "he disobeyed all orders two or three days before Culloden."

As they passed in the darkness through the marshlands of Coireach and Caipleach, the Prince sank to the armpits in a bog, and Malcolm suffered a similar mischance in his efforts to extricate him. Having wiped off as much of the peaty ooze as they could, and put the brandy bottle under contribution, they resumed their march. They were now approaching the government station at Sligachan, where extreme caution was essential, and Malcolm was anxious to pass it in the night.

Their effort was successful, and when they had cleared the zone of danger the Prince was in a merry mood, and, glancing at his soiled garments, said he would one day yet walk the streets of London in the kilt he was then wearing. This fortitude was characteristic of him, and it failed not to inspire the admiration of all who were ever associated with him; as one account has it, "He always made light of his discomforts."

Here it should be noted that the late W. B. Blaikie, a historian who is justly acclaimed as one of our most reliable authorities on the Rebellion of '45, asserts that the route followed by the Prince and his guide was by Sconser, over Druim nan Cleòc, by the head of Loch Ainort, to Luib, thence through Strath-Mór, by Loch Slapin side, to Kilmaree, and finally to Elgol, their destination. Many have written of this phase of the rebellion; and it is noteworthy that no one has ever called that authority in question. That fact strikes us as strange, when we consider the circumstances of the case, and especially when we remember the position of the centres of popuation in that part of Skye at that time. Had they followed that route they would perforce have had to pass, in broad daylight, through several districts that were then inhabited, namely, Torra Michaig, Kinlochainort, Aricharnach, and Luib, not to mention the very populous region of Kilmaree, before they could arrive at Elgol, where their journey was to end.

Let it be said at once, that in none of the existing records of the event is there any item of evidence to show that this was the itinerary they followed. Indeed, apart altogether from the manifest needlessness for making such a detour, the data that are available point to a route at once as easy for men on foot, obviously more direct, and certainly more secure. That way was through Glen Sligachan and Strath na Créithich. Thus, in a statement made to Bishop Forbes by Captain Malcolm himself, and quoted in "The Lyon in Mourning," we find this sentence: "The Captain remarked to the Prince that it was proper they shall pass the road that leads into the Laird of MacLeod's country in the night-time, for fear of parties spying them." This had been Malcolm's chief concern ever since they left Scorrybreck, for he knew they would be out of danger once they had negotiated that point in their journey. The road he was so anxious to cross was that track that leaves the present highway on the declivity a few hundred yards to the north of Sligachan Inn, and by Carnan Thormaid wends westwards through Crossal to Dùthaich 'ic Leòid.

The narrative continues: "They succeeded in crossing it by break of day, and the Prince, looking about him and seeing nothing but hills all around them, said: "I am sure the Devil himself cannot find us now." That description of their surroundings at once suggest Glen Sligachan; and the sense of security it exhibits rules out the possibility of a journey through the populous townships that have been mentioned—a journey that would of necessity have had to be made, in its major portion, in the light of broad day. Moreover, in a testimony given by Captain Malcolm MacLeod, Iain Dubh, the old Chief of Mackinnon, and others, the total length of the itinerary from Scorrybreck to Elgol is given as 24 miles. It is actually 22, if the traverse is made through Glen Sligachan; while it is over 30 miles if we follow it by Blaikie's route.

Again, in several accounts that are extant of this part of the Prince's wanderings, it is stated that they had barely crossed the head of Loch Sligachan before the break of day; while in the narration of the event given by Captain Malcolm to Boswell, it is said that Elgol was reached "pretty early in the morning." Such a time for their arrival is consistent only with the shorter route through this difficult terrain, for, allowing for delays, and bearing in mind the time at which daybreak occurs at the beginning of July, they could have accomplished the journey through Glen Sligachan by 6 o'clock in the morning, whereas the course through Strath Mór, which is over 20 miles, could not have been covered before 10 o'clock in the forenoon.

But what is perhaps the strongest link of all in this chain of evidence, is the presence, at the base of Marsco, in Glen Sligachan, of a well, known as "Tobar a' Phrionnsa," or the Prince's Well; and here we have a striking instance of the value of a knowledge of place-names as a handmaiden to history.

The day was now advancing as the wanderers trod the rough ways through Glen Sligachan, Strath na Créithich, past Camusfhionary, along the shore by the steep slopes of Leacach and Ben Cleitt; and here a fresh cause for anxiety supervened.

Owing to the fact that such a large number of the men of Strathaird had served in the Jacobite army, Malcolm was afraid that the Prince's identity might be here disclosed. He busied himself, therefore, in perfecting the latter's disguise. He tore the ruffles from off his shirt, the buckles from his shoes, which he tied instead with strings; but, as Malcolm used to assert with enthusiasm, "There was something about him not ordinary, something of the stately and grand."

It happened, however, just as Malcolm had feared; for, on approaching the township of Elgol, they met two men who had been "out" in the Rebellion. These at once recognised the Prince; and, we are told, "They lifted up their hands, and wept bitterly at seeing him in such a sad pickle." Malcolm cautioned them against such demonstrations, and made them swear on the naked dirk that they would not divulge they had seen the Prince until his escape had been made public.

One of Malcolm's sisters was married in Elgol to a tacksman named John Mackinnon. This man had been a captain in the Highland army; and as Malcolm had no cause to suspect his loyalty, he made for the house of his brother-in-law. He entered, leaving the Prince outside; and, after the customary greetings had been exchanged, he informed his sister that he had come to Strathaird in the hope that it was safer than Raasay. He asked her if any redcoats had come to the district, and he was assured that none had been seen there so far; but, she added, he would get more definite information from her husband, who was that morning from home, but was expected to return at any moment.

While she was preparing the usual fare for travellers in those days, namely, bread, cheese, and milk, Malcolm announced that he had left a servant outside, and he would go and call him in. This was done, and the Prince entered. With seeming diffidence he deposited the baggage he carried in a corner, took off his bonnet, and made a low bow to his master. There was something in the deportment of the servant that greatly attracted Mrs. Mackinnon. She asked Malcolm where he had got such a fine type of "man," for said she, "there is that about the lad that I like."

They were now asked to partake of food; but "Lewie," preserving his deferential demeanour, held back in order to make it appear that it was not his habit to sit at the same table as his "master." The latter, however, commanded him to go forward; and then only did he obey, "still keeping off his bonnet."

When the Prince and Malcolm were partaking of food, the lady of the house, who had been watching outside, returned with the news that her husband was coming. Desiring to be excused for leaving the table with such informal haste, Malcolm hurried out to meet his relative, in order that he might assure himself of his continued attachment to the Jacobite cause.

After the customary salutations, Malcolm commented on the large number of government ships that were then cruising along the coast; and remarked he hoped the Prince was not on board any of them. Mackinnon said he hoped likewise, at the same time expressing the wish that the Prince were then in his keeping; "for," said he "we would take care of him." Convinced now beyond doubt of the loyalty of his brother-in-law, Malcolm said: "Well, then, he is in your house"; and, on hearing this, Mackinnon was so transported with joy that Malcolm had to remind him he must preserve his customary composure, lest the curiosity of the servants should be stirred. They entered the house, and found the Prince playing with the young son of Mackinnon.

After he had made obeisance to the Prince with becoming restraint, Mackinnon sent his servants on different errands, to get them out of the way, while he and his guests discussed their next course of action. Among other things, the propriety of acquainting the old chief with the presence of the Prince in his territory came under review; and the story is variously told as to how he became a party to the escape of Prince Charlie from Skye.

By some it is said that the Prince was averse to tell Mackinnon, owing to the advanced age of the latter; but that his clansman, on going to the shore to prepare a boat for the passage to the mainland, had accidentally met his chief, and that he could not refrain from telling him what had transpired. The chief was overjoyed to hear his Prince was still free, and that he could be of service to him once again. His galley was brought from Kilmaree round Rudha na h-Easgainne; and it put into a cove near Prince Charlie's Cave there, where the refugees awaited its coming.

Captain Malcolm now proposed that he should be allowed to relinquish his charge -"to honest Mackinnon," for he was afraid that his absence from home might be noticed, and that questions would be asked. The Prince commended this as a prudent step; and, after receiving a souvenir, in the form of a "silver stock buckle," in addition to a present of ten guineas, which he accepted much against his will, for "the royal purse did not appear to contain above forty," Malcolm performed his last service to his Prince by lighting the latter's "short cutty pipe with a tow," inadvertently singeing the royal cheek the while!

As they were preparing to embark, Malcolm was given a letter by the Prince, in which he subscribed his name as "James Thomson." It was addressed to Donald Roy MacDonald, thanking all in Skye, and in Raasay, for what they had done on his behalf.

After a sojourn of six days, Prince Charlie left the shores of Skye, shortly after 8 o'clock, on the evening of Friday, 4th July, 1746. And while he is being conveyed across the Sound of Sleat to the mainland, we turn for a moment to consider the fate of some of those who had been instrumental in effecting his escape.

We have seen that Flora MacDonald had parted with the Prince at the inn in Portree, whence, in the company of Neil MacEachan, she set off to her home in Sleat; and it is said she never even hinted to her mother the reason for her speedy return from Uist. About the ninth day after her arrival, she was made a prisoner by soldiers who served under MacLeod of Talisker, an officer who made himself odious by his assiduity in tracking down the Jacobite loyalists of Skye.

She was unceremoniously hurried on board the "Furnace," from which she was fortunately transferred, after two days' confinement, to the "Eltham," then commanded by the "polite and generous" Commodore Smith. As his ship was passing down the Sound of Sleat, the commander of the "Eltham" allowed Flora to go ashore for two hours to acquaint her mother with what had happened; and she was allowed to take with her from home one Kate MacDonald, as her maid.

In the month of November she was transferred from her "honourable captivity" on board the "Eltham" to the "Royal Sovereign," by which she was taken to London. There she was consigned to the custody of a man named William Dick, in whose house she remained a prisoner until the passing of the Indemnity Act in 1747.

On her release, she found herself immediately famous, and perhaps the chief person of interest in the Metropolis. People vied with one another in fêting her. She was visited, among others, by Frederick, Prince of Wales, who asked her why she had been persuaded to give such service to one who was a rebel. Her reply was that she would have acted in a similar manner towards anyone else, irrespective of station, had she found him in the same sad plight in which she had found Prince Charlie. It is said that Prince

Frederick was so charmed with her ingenuous answer that he filled her hand with gold.

Several influential persons, chief of whom was Lady Primrose, organised a subscription on her behalf; and a sum, amounting to a few hundred pounds, was thereby collected. This gift enabled her to hire a post-chaise for Edinburgh, whither she travelled in the company of Captain Malcolm MacLeod of Raasay, as Miss Robertson, "in order to avoid too much attention on the way." She stayed a few days in Edinburgh, after which she resumed her journey for Skye.

Three years after this, at the age of 28, she married Allan MacDonald, the eldest son of MacDonald of Kingsborough. For twenty-two years they resided in Flodigarry, whence they removed, in 1772, to Kingsborough, when Allan succeeded to the patrimony on the death of his father.

There they were visited, among other notable travellers, by Dr. Johnson and Boswell; and, as the former notes, "we were entertained with the usual hospitality by Mr MacDonald and his lady, Flora MacDonald." Boswell makes the very pertinent observation that the family of Kingsborough was in straitened circumstances; and he attributed the fact to the exorbitant rents that were then exacted from tacksmen generally in Skye.

These burdens led many representatives of good families to emigrate to the colonies; and the MacDonalds left Kingsborough in 1774 for America. On the way out the ship, "Baliol," in which they sailed was attacked by a French privateer; and a sharp struggle ensued, in which Flora gave a magnificent exhibition of her native resourcefulness and fortitude. Refusing to seek shelter with the other ladies who were aboard, she bustled about among the men, always in ready helpfulness. In the course of the fight, her arm was broken by a flying splinter. It was set by a young medical student named Kenneth MacDonald, who had relinquished his studies at Glasgow University, and was emigrating to America.

The MacDonalds had just purchased a small estate in North Carolina when the American War of Independence broke out; and Allan of Kingsborough joined the Royal Emigrant Regiment with the commission of captain. This force suffered a severe reverse, and MacDonald was made prisoner.

Thereupon Flora returned home, and went to live in Milton of South Uist. On the conclusion of the war, her husband returned to Skye, and they resumed their occupancy of Kingsborough, where, from henceforth, they lived in fairly comfortable circumstances.

They had a family of seven children, five sons and two daughters, one of the latter being the wife of a reputable Skyeman, Major Alexander MacLeod of Lochbay.

Flora died in the year 1790, in the township of Peinduin, where she was on a visit to a near relative. She was buried in the churchyard of Kilmuir; and it is said that the concourse of people at her funeral was the largest ever seen in Skye at such a ceremony; for it was estimated that over 3000 persons attended. Her grave is marked by a noble Celtic cross, on which is inscribed as epitaph the eulogy once paid her by Dr. Johnson: "A name that will be mentioned in history, and, if courage and fidelity be virtues, mentioned with honour."

MacDonald of Kingsborough.

As has already been mentioned, the crew of the vessel that conveyed the Prince and his party across the Minch to Skye, was arrested immediately on their return to Uist; and they were forced to confess all the knew of the Prince's wanderings. Five or six days after that, the "Furnace" sailed into Loch Snizort, and made for the shore below Kingsborough House. Captain Ferguson himself, with some of his men, went ashore to reconnoitre, and they met one of the factor's servants, a dairy-maid, with whom they entered into conversation.

They asked her to accompany them on board their ship, and, flattered by the invitation, she innocently consented. She was entertained so well that, it is said, she let slip the remark that she had not enjoyed such fun since the night the Prince had been in Kingsborough House. This was, of course, all that Ferguson wanted to know, and he immediately proceeded to arrest Kingsborough. This was done; but, on the intercession of General Campbell, the prisoner was allowed to go on parole to Fort Augustus, where his chief, Sir Alexander, then was, at the headquarters of the army of the government.

DUNTULM.

On his arrival there, Kingsborough was instantly ordered to be put in chains. Owing to an inadvertence, he was soon afterwards released, and was just preparing to return to Skye when the mistake was discovered, and peremptory orders were issued for his immediate arrest. He was brought before Lord Albemarle, the commander-in-chief of the forces in Scotland, who, on hearing of the charge preferred against him, gruffly ordered his subordinates to "throw the dog into irons."

From Fort Augustus, MacDonald was transferred to Edinburgh Castle. There he occupied the same quarters as Major MacDonell, Leckie, and other Jacobite prisoners; but, from the fact that he narrated the Prince's wanderings with such glowing enthusiasm, and extolled his virtues in such a convincing manner to those who visited him in prison, his jailers thought it prudent to consign him to solitary confinement; for, as Bishop Forbes naively remarks, "truth, though never so glaring, when it runs cross to the partial notions and inclinations of poor frail mortals, grates very hard, and becomes a very uneasy and painful thing."

It was characteristic of Kingsborough that he never complained of the treatment he received while in prison. He was a man of such marvellous fortitude, and forbearance, that even his jailers were constrained to express their admiration of him for these qualities. Strong representations had frequently been made for his release by people of influence; and especial emphasis was laid on the fact that, as he had acted in the capacity of manager of the estate of his chief for several years, it would be an act of grace to the widow of the latter were MacDonald set free to resume his duties as factor. It was not, however, until the general amnesty had been extended to all Jacobite offenders that "Honest Kingsborough" was released, after having, as Bishop Forbes expresses it, "suffered twelve long months' imprisonment for one night's lodging."

On his return to Skye, he resumed the management of the estates of the clan; and he continued in the execution of that office until his death, in 1772, at the age of 83 years. He was noted for his business acumen, his probity in all transactions, and his capacity for hard work. All who knew him spoke highly of his character, and Bishop Forbes pronounced on him the now famous and well-merited encomium, "So long as a spark of honesty remains, the name of MacDonald of Kingsborough will ever have a mark of veneration put upon it."

Captain Allan MacDonald of Kingsborough.

"Kingsborough" was succeeded by his oldest son, Allan, who, though he had no share in "The '45," had yet such a close association with those who were participants in that affair that a passing mention must be made of him here. We have seen that he was married to Flora MacDonald in 1750, and that for a time they lived in Flodigarry, whence they removed to Kingsborough in 1772.

Allan was a man of splendid physique and extraordinary strength. Few men of his age could hope to vie with him; on many an occasion he was the conqueror even of the redoubtable Martin of Bealach in those trials of strength that were then in vogue. Boswell, who visited him in the company of Dr. Johnson, describes him as "completely the figure of a gallant Highlander, exhibiting the graceful mien and manly looks which our popular Scotch song has attributed to that character."

The portraits of him that are extant show him to have been a man of great force of character; his leonine countenance, the very prominent bridge of his shapely Roman nose, his firm mouth, straightly cut, are the outward expressions of a powerful personality.

He was reputed to have been the best judge of cattle in the Highlands in his day, and, during his father's tenure of the post of factor for the estate, the services of Allan were in frequent demand as valuator of the cattle that then composed the major portion of the rent. Many a herd he drove to the trysts of Falkirk, and thus he earned for himself the name of "Ailein nam mìle mart," or "Allan of the thousand kine."

He died in 1792, and was buried beside his wife in the churchyard of Kilmuir.

Donald Roy MacDonald.

Among all those who had rendered such faithful service to the Prince in his wanderings, few were more active than Donald Roy MacDonald. A reference has already been made to the assiduous care he showed in preparing for the Prince's safety in Skye. When the latter left the island he asked Captain Malcolm MacLeod of Raasay to convey a letter to Ronald Roy MacDonald; and, as soon as the captain arrived at his home, he sent a man with the Prince's note to the district of Braes, to the house of a certain Peter MacQueen, in the township of Camustinivaig. Thither Donald Roy had been advised by the Prince to proceed on Sunday after their parting at the inn in Portree; for it would seem that it had then been the Prince's intention to stay longer in Raasay than he did, and to cross from that island to Braes, and not to Scorrybreck, as he had actually done.

Donald Roy arrived in Camustinivaig on the night appointed; and, in spite of the agony he endured from his wounded foot, he had been wandering all over Trotarnish during the whole of the previous week in order to obtain information of the movements of the Prince's pursuers. On his receiving the royal letter from Captain Malcolm's servant, Donald Roy left Braes, and made for the north of Trotarnish.

There he spent most of his time hiding in the shore caves of Skye, frequently changing his place of concealment. When circumstances allowed it, he indulged in the strange recreation of the composition of Latin verse! He was an accomplished classical scholar; and two poems by him are extant, one "A Lament for Culloden," and the other an "Ode to his Wounded Foot." They exhibit pleasing examples of poetic imagery, and are consummate productions so far as the technique of Latin versification is concerned. They were published in "The Lyon in Mourning"; but, as they appear there, they have been marred by very careless editing. Selections from these works will be given when we come to deal with the state of education during the period that ended with "The '45."

Though he constantly exposed himself to great dangers, and the pursuit of him was often perplexingly close, it says much for his coolness and his resource that he alone, of those who had aided the Prince, succeeded so cleverly in evading capture.

The Mackinnons.

A different tale remains to be told of those devoted heroes who sailed with the Prince from Strathaird to the district of Morar. Mackinnon was shunned by his brother chiefs of the mainland, who impugned his action in bringing the Prince back in no mistaken terms; for they dreaded another visitation by the government troops, and the consequent devastation of their estates. The old chief was captured before he left the mainland, while the rest of the crew were arrested by the Militia on their return to Skye. The brave Captain John Mackinnon, whose house the Prince had visited in Elgol, was threatened by Ferguson with irons if he would not turn informer; and, when he refused, his tormentor "swore bloodily," according to the account in "The Lyon in Mourning," "that when he got him on board, the barrisdale and the cat-o'-nine-tails would make him squeal."

Another of the crew, by name John MacInnes, was examined by Captain Ferguson himself. Despite the acts of intimidation to which he was subjected this loyal fellow declined to disclose anything. Thereupon it was ordered that he be stripped naked, strung to the yardarm, and given five hundred lashes with the cat-o'-nine-tails, in instalments of fifty—a cowardly proceeding, designed to give the victim an opportunity of turning traitor in the intervals of his punishment. The stout fellow, however, endured to the bitter end, "till the blood gushed out at both his sides," and he was thrown into the ship's hold more dead than alive. The Rev. John Mackinnon, who wrote the "New Statistical Account of the Parish of Strath" in 1841, says that this man died about 1811, and that he himself remembered "seeing the marks of the cat-o'-nine-tails on his back"; while Bishop Forbes says "Kingsborough witnessed this scene of cruelty, as he himself frequently declared to me."

Among others who played a part, noble or otherwise, according to one's point of view, in the rebellion of 1745, were Colonel John MacLeod of Talisker and Major Allan MacDonald of Knock.

JOHN MACLEOD OF TALISKER.

Just as the foregoing were all whole-hearted supporters of the Jacobite cause, so John, IV. of Talisker, was as enthusiastic on behalf of the government. At the time the Rebellion broke out, he was studying for the medical profession. He relinquished his studies, joined the body of "Independent Companies" raised by his chief, and was commissioned with the rank of captain. After the defeat at Inverury, he brought from Skye to Inverness many of those who then deserted, and he was present both at the Rout of Moy and in the retreat in which his clan, with several others, played such an inglorious role when the Prince entered the town of Inverness.

After Culloden, none was more eager than he in tracking down the Jacobite loyalists; and it was mainly through his activities that such notable persons as Flora MacDonald and Captain Malcolm MacLeod of Raasay were captured and delivered over to the vindictive Captain Ferguson. Talisker was nothing if not true to his trust; in this respect differing widely from those other gentlemen from Skye who were officers in the Hanoverian Army.

Shortly after "The '45," he joined the Scots Brigade in the Netherlands; and he retired from that service with the rank of Colonel. He was a cultured man; so learned, indeed, that he deeply impressed Dr. Johnson, who visited him in 1772. The great lexicographer also pays a compliment to Talisker's wife, a daughter of MacLean of Coll, as one who was "skilful in several languages." The Colonel was visited by Thomas Pennant, by Dr. Johnson, and also, in 1780, by the traveller John Knox, who says of him that he was then "extremely corpulent," and he refers to Talisker House as "The seat of plenty, hospitality, and good nature."

Colonel MacLeod died without issue in 1798, in his 80th year. Ronald MacDonald, a grieve in Minginish, composed his lament, and it is a song of touching beauty:

" 'S fada chaidh do bheusan
An dreach 's an cliù, 's an uaisle
An céill 'san inbh' 's an gàirdeachas
An àilleachd 's ann an uamhar.
B' ionann air a' chinneadh
Ann an lionsgaradh na fine thu
Bho 'n chiad la riamh 's a ghineadh thu
Bu chinneachail air buaidh thu."

It may be mentioned that the last of the family of Talisker was Major Donald MacLeod, who sold the estate in 1821, when he emigrated to Tasmania.

MAJOR ALLAN MACDONALD OF KNOCK.

While several members of the family of MacLeod were zealous supporters of the government in this rebellion, it is true that there was only one gentleman of the MacDonalds of Skye of whom it can be said that he devoted himself whole-heartedly to the cause of the Hanoverians. This was Major Allan MacDonald of Knock. It was he, as we have seen, who arrested Donald MacLeod of Gartrigil; and he is said to have treated those Jacobites whom he took prisoners with great severity. After the rebellion had been quelled, it was alleged that he informed Captain Ferguson of the presence of a stock of arms in Mogstadt House, probably in order to gain favour with his confidant. In consequence of this, Sir Alexander, fearing that a search would be made, consigned all weapons to the sea, off Kilbride.

In 1753 we find that a Royal Warrant was issued, authorising payment of the sum of £100 out of the forfeited estates, to Major Allan MacDonald, "for good and faithful services rendered." He was heartily hated in his native island; and it was for that reason, probably, that he was induced to leave Skye, and spend the later part of his life in Ayr. One of his sons, Donald, had a distinguished military career, attaining the rank of general. He fought in Holland, where he was wounded in 1799, and died later in London.

A few minor incidents fall to be narrated before this record of the first portion of the eighteenth century is complete.

As soon as it became known that Prince Charlie had betaken himself to Skye, the Militia concentrated its attentions on that island, and the search became intense. Captain Ferguson thereupon established the headquarters for the ships of war in Loch na Dàil, at the head of which inlet the Earl of Loudon pitched his camp. Then the work of repression and devastation began. Practically all the houses in Raasay were burned down, while all the boats, with two exceptions, it is said, were either confiscated or given to the flames. Tortures were inflicted, often on innocent people, in the attempt to extract information about the Prince. Yet all suffered in Skye, as in other parts of the Highlands, with a will, rather than turn traitors; the unholy bribe of £30,000 failed to induce anyone to swerve from the paths of loyalty!

We have seen that Sir Alexander MacDonald was with Cumberland's army at Fort Augustus at the time his factor, MacDonald of Kingsborough, was taken there as a prisoner. When Sir Alexander appeared in his camp, Cumberland accosted him in his customary gruff manner, blurting out tactlessly, when the chief was presented to him: "And is this the great rebel of the isles?" Galled by his hauteur and the implied insult, Sir Alexander retorted: "Had I been a rebel, you would never have crossed the Spey."

When the last embers of the rebellion were still smouldering, Sir Alexander died. He was on his way to London, in order to interview the Duke of Cumberland, and had barely left Skye when he contracted a severe chill. Acute pneumonia supervened, and he died in the barracks at Glenelg, in November, 1746. He was buried in the parish churchyard of Kilmore in Sleat, where he was accorded what was perhaps one of the most sumptuous funerals ever witnessed in our island. All the pipers of note were there, and a mighty concourse of mourners gathered from far and near. Such, indeed, was the magnificence of the ceremony, and so great was the consequent expenditure, that it is said to have cost the estate about £2645—truly an enormous sum of money for those days. Strong drink was dispensed with such a lavish hand that acts of riotous revelry ensued. In the fights that took place, many were grievously injured, and a MacDonald of Ord, referring to a similar carouse years afterwards, said of this one: "There has not been a funeral like it since that of Sir Alexander MacDonald, when three men were killed, and fifty were taken out of the churchyard with the breath just left in them."

CHAPTER XII.

SOCIAL HISTORY, 1700-1750.

RADICAL changes in the social life of the people of the Highlands followed the rebellion of 1745. These will be dealt with in greater detail under appropriate heads, and may now be merely hinted at in passing.

The power of the chiefs was considerably weakened; and, by a strange irony, no distinction was made between those who had been loyal and the others who had been disloyal to the government. No longer could the chiefs call out their clansmen in arms at their own behest. The heritable jurisdiction which they had exercised for centuries was abolished; the administration of justice was henceforth to be vested in men who were duly qualified for the practice of the law, and were to be appointed for that purpose by the crown.

The Disarming Act forbade the possession of any weapons whatsoever, though we know that this clause was often cleverly evaded.

"Ged tha bacadh air na h-armaibh,
Chùm mi Spàinnteach thun na seilge";

the hunter-bard, Duncan Bàn Macintyre, confesses in one of his songs. Even the bagpipe was held to be an "instrument of war," and was accordingly proscribed!

DRESS.

But what injured the feelings of the Highlanders most, because it sought to deal a blow at what they considered to be the distinctive feature of their race, was the prohibition of the Highland dress. The galling nature of this imposition, when they were concussed into the wearing of the tightly-fitting trousers, is well exemplified in the poem, "Òran na Briogais," by Duncan Bàn; while Lachlan MacPherson, the bard of Strathmassie, and John MacCodrum, the family bard of the MacDonalds of Sleat, have each composed a satire on the same theme. The first mentioned anathematises the new costume, thus:

"O 's e a bhriogais liathghlas
Am bliadhna chuir mulad oirnn
'S e 'n rud nach fhacas riamh oirnn,
'S nach miann leinn a chumail oirnn,
'S na'm bitheamaid uile dìleas,
Do'n rìgh bha toirt cuireadh dhuinn,
Chan fhaicte sinn gu dìlinn
A' strìochdadh do'n chulaidh sin";

and it is with evident relish that the same poet recounts the fact that this incommodation was inflicted on "Hanoverian" and rebel alike:

"'S a h-uile h-aon de'n pharlamaid
Feallsail le'm fiosrachadh,
'Nuair chuir iad air na Caimbeulaich,
Teanntachd nam briogaisean,
'S gur h-iad a rinn am feum dhaibh
A' bhliadhna thain' an streupag,
A h-uile h-aon dhiubh dh'éirigh
Gu léir am milisi dhaibh."

It should be stated here, however, as we have already pointed out, that long before the Highland dress had been placed under a ban, it had ceased to be the universal garb in the Isle of Skye. There are several references in the works of the bards to the wearing of trousers before "The '45," and Martin Martin, a native of the island, who wrote at the beginning of the eighteenth century, declares that this article of apparel was in common use in his day. In describing the clothing of the people, he says: "The men wear a coat, waistcoat, and breeches, as elsewhere."

There is also extant an interesting account of the conditions of life in the household of the tacksman of Ullinish at the beginning of the century under review. Mention is made of the dress worn by the boys in that family, and it may be taken as representing pretty closely the kind of clothes then generally in vogue among children of that quality. It consisted of a kilt, a waistcoat with sleeves buttoned at the wrists, and a woollen shirt. Boys wore neither foot- nor head-gear, winter or summer, "in rain or in snow," though some of the older lads had a pair of brogues, made of raw hide, "more for ornament than for use." The boys bathed in cold water every morning, in order to season themselves to the weather.

The dress of the women of the higher ranks in Skye was similar to that worn by those of the same station in life elsewhere in Scotland at that time. Among the so-called "vulgar," the arisaid continued to be the common article of apparel; while around the head was still worn a kerchief of fine linen, closely fitting, with its loose ends tapering down the back. The women of this class went barefooted during the greater part of the year.

CUSTOMS.

In accordance with their views on civility to strangers, doors were seldom closed, and were never locked; for it was considered to be tantamount to lack of trust in one's fellows if the lock were used. The key was associated with meanness and that cardinal sin, inhospitality; so that "cho mosach ris a' ghlais" (as mean as the key) had been raised by them to the status of a proverb.

When privacy was desired for a space, a whittled wand was fixed athwart the open door, and care was taken to have it removed as soon as circumstances in the household permitted. We have it on the testimony of Martin that the practice of inserting the "maide doicheallach" (the stick of churlishness) was a common custom in his own day.

The wayfarer was always welcomed at whatever house he called, and it was looked upon as a privilege to entertain him. His purpose was never enquired after, and everything was done to make him comfortable. His feet were washed, for roads did not then exist, and bogs abounded. The tracks that had been marked out by the treading of people and driven animals for ages showed small cairns at approximately equal distances. These heaps marked the places where the relays in the funeral procession laid down the corpse on the way to the burial. This custom was continued in Skye long after this; and even to-day one may meet with the observance of the ancient usage in the numerous little mounds of stones to be found on the divide, along the branch-roads to Tarskavaig, and to Ord, in Sleat.

The festival of St. Michael, which was held among the Catholic community of the Long Island until recent times, was then celebrated in Skye with much ceremony. All the young men of the parish turned out, each on his best horse, and on a level sward by the shore they indulged in equestrian sports. It was a day of high holiday, and the cavalcade, as it set off for the rendezvous, was followed and admired by young and old. When they arrived on the field of play, each contestant lifted his sweetheart behind him, and, with a tangle-stem, dried and hardened months before, he lashed his horse to full gallop. After the games, they partook of cakes, which had been prepared for the occasion, and were called "St. Michael's Bannocks."

THE CHURCH.

During the first portion of the eighteenth century, there is little to record of the activities of the Church in Skye. To all intents and purposes it was a period of stagnation, marked by a lukewarmness towards religion that bordered almost on total indifference. And the causes of this state of unconcern for the Church, and its affairs, are not far to seek.

On account of their sympathy with the Stuart cause in 1715 and 1745, the people were strongly inclined to support Episcopalianism; and the most ardent Jacobites among them could not be expected to view with disfavour even the faith of the Roman Catholics. It was with the aim of checking the popular leaning to the latter church that a law was passed in 1700 for the "Prevention of the Growth of Popery in the Highlands"; but such an act could have but one result, and that was to urge the Catholics in a body to the side of the exiled House of Stuart, and to give a bias to the less devout among the Protestants in the same political direction.

Again, owing to the extent of the parishes of Skye at the beginning of the century, and to the great difficulties experienced in travelling, it was impossible for the clergy, adequately, to minister to the needs of their scattered flocks. The ministers had splendid auxiliaries in the catechists and schoolmasters; but their combined efforts were often of little avail in combating the growing unconcern for the Church. When it is remembered that people had often to walk a distance of over twenty miles in order to attend a religious service, and that ministers had to ride long distances across roadless moors, and through dangerous mountain passes, or to sail the stormy intervening seas to adjacent islands that formed part of the parish, it becomes immediately apparent how difficult were the problems that confronted the church in those days.

And the imputation has often been levelled against the incumbents that their evangelising spirit was then none too robust; while the firm belief of some in the general superstitions of the age may be cited as an index of their mentality. One cleric, Rev. John MacLeod, who in 1742 had been promoted from Uig to the Parish of Duirinish, believed he possessed the gift of second-sight; and Martin Martin makes mention of an incident, of the truth of which he says he was "assured by the minister of the place" (Sleat), that on the night of the Battle of Killiecrankie it was observed that, instead of milk, blood was given by the cows of "James MacDonald of Capstil," who was killed in the battle.

Beset by the prevailing indifference, and the general difficulties of the situation, we need not marvel at the fact that some of the clergy lost heart for their work, and allowed themselves to sink into the morass of apathy that surrounded them. From being indifferent ministers of the gospel, they naturally developed into assiduous cultivators of the soil, and their good fat glebes soon came to absorb their whole attention.

The incongruous role played by these clerical farmers was bound to wound the sensibilities of the perfervid, and to excite the wit of the satirical. Of the latter, none could apprehend so clearly the inconsistency of their profession with their practice as the poet, Rob Donn; and with that incisive raillery and good-natured banter of which he was master, he depicts them as follows:

" Falbh 'nan cuideachd 's 'nan còmhradh,
'S gheibh thu mòran de'n ghràisg ud,
Dheanadh ceannaich' no seòldair,
Dheanadh dròbhair, no fàctor,
Dheanadh tuathannach sunndach,
Dheanadh stiùbhart neo-chràbhach;
'S mach 'o'n cheaird air na mhionnaich iad
Tha na h-uile ni gàsd' ac";

all of which means, that they were fitted by nature for any and every calling except that sacred one that they chose as their life's work.

There were, however, some ministers in Skye at that time who were imbued with a strong zeal for their high office. The number of the incumbents had been increased in the island, for, in the year 1726, new parishes were formed by the division of the large and unworkable old ones. In order to obtain a conception of the dimensions of these districts, it may be said that the Parish of the Small Isles then comprised Strath, Sleat, and the islands of Rum, Eigg. Canna, and Muck; while the extensive Parish of Snizort stretched from Loch Sligachan on the south to Loch Greshornish on the north, whence, by a line drawn eastwards to Rona, it was divided from Kilmuir.

The newly-formed sub-division of Snizort, namely, the parish of Portree, was served by the Rev. Hugh MacDonald as its first minister. He was a graduate in Arts of the university of Aberdeen, and was married to Elizabeth, daughter of Sir James MacDonald, second baronet of Sleat, and Mary, the favourite sister of Iain Breac, the Chief of Dunvegan. A few years after his settlement there, a church, with a slated roof, was erected in the village of Portree. He served this parish for about thirty years until his death, in 1756, at the comparatively early age of 57 years.

In the parish of Snizort, which, in the early part of the century, comprised the parish of Portree, we have seen that Rev. Donald MacQueen was minister until about 1706, when he was succeeded by his son, Archibald, who was a graduate of the university of Edinburgh. The latter is described as a "person of uncommon abilities, who distinguished himself as well by erudition and extensive knowledge as by his piety, zeal, and other virtues." By his second wife, Florence MacDonald, he had a family of eight sons and one daughter. He died at the advanced age of 83, in the year 1754, when he was succeeded by his second son, William, who had been admitted to the charge of the reduced parish in 1753. Another of his sons was the famous Rev. Donald MacQueen, the cicerone of Dr. Johnson, and minister of the parish of Kilmuir, where he was ordained in the year 1740 as successor to Rev. Kenneth Bethune. At the beginning of the century, the Rev. Daniel Macaulay, a graduate in Arts of Edinburgh University, was the incumbent in Kilmuir. He was the first Presbyterian minister there, and he remained only seven years, when he was translated to the parish of Bracadale. His successor was Rev. Kenneth Bethune, a son of the scholarly minister of Bracadale, and he served the parish from 1718 until his death in 1739.

The parish of Bracadale was served, as we have already seen, in the early years of this century by Rev. John Bethune; and it has also been mentioned that he was succeeded on his death in

1708 by Rev. Daniel MacAulay, who came thither from Kilmuir. The latter continued as minister there until the year 1748, when he died, and was succeeded by Rev. William MacLeod, who came from a charge in Barra, and remained in this parish until 1765.

At the beginning of the period under review, the minister of Duirinish was the talented Dugald MacPherson, on whose death, in 1717, the Rev. Norman MacLeod was appointed as successor. The latter had previously held the charge of Strath. In the year 1739, while he was crossing the Minch on a visit to Barra, the boat was lost, and all aboard were drowned. He was succeeded by Rev. John MacLeod, M.A., who had been promoted to this parish from Uig in the year 1742. This minister entertained the belief that he was endowed with the gift of second-sight, and yet he is referred to as a man of great ability, "equalled by few," and one who was most zealous in the interests of religion. He died in 1752 at the age of 50 years.

Towards the end of the previous century, the parish of Strath was served by Rev. Martin MacPherson, the son of the famous minister of Duirinish, Rev. Dugald MacPherson. He died in 1712 at the early age of 40 years, and is reputed to have been a man of great refinement and wide scholarship. He was succeeded by Rev. Norman MacLeod, who, five years afterwards, went to Duirinish. In 1717, the Rev. Donald MacLeod, a graduate of Aberdeen, was called to fill the vacant charge, and he served the parish until 1749, when he died at the age of 49 years.

In the adjacent district of Sleat, the Rev. Edmund MacQueen, M.A., was admitted minister of the newly-constituted parish in 1726, and continued there until 1741. In that year the noted minister, Rev. Dr. John MacPherson, was appointed his successor. The new incumbent was a man of profound erudition, a monument to which remains in his famous "Dissertations." He was a classical scholar of note, as well as a poet of no mean order. An ode written by him in Latin, and shown to Dr. Johnson, so impressed that great author that he commented: "It does him honour. He has a great deal of Latin, and good Latin." He was married to Janet, a daughter of Donald MacLeod of Bernera, and two of their sons were Rev. Martin MacPherson of Sleat and Sir John MacPherson, who was a Governor-general in India.

EDUCATION.

In the year 1696 an Act was passed by the Scottish Parliament enjoining every parish to establish a school and to build a suitable house for a schoolmaster; but, although it received a greater measure of attention than did previous enactments of a similar nature, its observance was left in abeyance, so far as Skye was concerned. No new schools were then erected in our island; but education was not neglected in consequence of that. The Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge had been formed in 1709, and its beneficent influence had penetrated to Skye early in the century.

It was only during the winter months that any attempt at education was made. Then any kind of shelter was utilised as a schoolhouse: barns were convenient places for the purpose, and on their floors the young men squatted on rushes, or sat on improvised seats, while they were being taught. The system of education was, however, of a very desultory nature; and only the very rudiments of knowledge were in most cases acquired.

As a result of the practice, instituted in the previous century, whereby tacksmen combined to secure the services of a schoolmaster for their children, men endowed with sound scholarship were often employed. Although these teachers were paid but a mere pittance, and were left to occupy the lowest rung in the social ladder, yet they gave unstinted service, being imbued with a perfervid urge to foster learning in those pupils who were under their charge.

One such schoolmaster in Skye at that time was John MacPherson, the son of Rev. Dugald MacPherson, minister of Duirinish, and brother of the Rev. Martin of Strath. He lived in Orbost, where he died about the year 1730. If we are to judge by results, this teacher must have been a man of wide learning and eminent ability. Mention has already been made of one of his pupils, namely, Donald Roy MacDonald, who figured so conspicuously as one of the guides of Prince Charlie. Two Latin poems by this man—one an ode composed to his wounded foot, and the other a lament on the disaster of Culloden—are still extant. They exhibit such chastity of diction, and such skill in the construction of Latin verse, that they deserve a greater publicity than has yet been accorded to them. These productions are the more commendable when we remember that their author was a hunted loyalist, skulking in the caves of Skye, when he wrote them, in order to "while away the time," as he himself declares. The work is of such a high order that one is tempted to quote a stanza or two in exemplification of the quality of these compositions. The first verse of the "Lament" is as follows:

"Ah! quantam tulero solicitudinem
Per praerupta vagans culmina montium
Per saltus varios, per cava rupium
Ericeta per aspera";

and in the "Ode" he says:

"Cum peto lectum cupidus quietis
Nocte perrarus brevis atque somnus
Prae pedis laesi nimio dolore
Lumina condit."

. . . .

"Interim curat medicus mederi
Sedulus partem mihi vulneratam
Et precor coeptis faveat benignus
Conditor orbis."

The "medicus" (physician) who is referred to here was Dr. John MacLean, whose ancestors had for many generations been hereditary doctors to the MacDonalds of Skye. He occupied Shulista rent free as perquisite of his office. He was a man of fine culture and one of the most noted botanists of the age, "for he had skill in the virtues of all local shrubs and herbs." Travellers, such as Pennant and Johnson, were much impressed by his wide learning. It is noteworthy that with him the post of hereditary physician to a chief comes to an end.

The common people were much influenced by the culture that prevailed in the houses of the higher orders in the island; for the association between the members of the clan was a very close one at that time. Besides, there was an eager desire for knowledge on the part of all, and they availed themselves of every opportunity to acquire some education. "The unhappiness of their education, and their want of converse with foreign nations," says Martin, "deprives them of the opportunities to cultivate and beautify their genius, which seems to have been formed by nature for great attainments."

Then, again, certain customs which they delighted to observe were calculated to develop their faculties. Around the fire of the ceilidh-house, the choicest tales were still told to appreciative audiences, and the works of the bards were held in high esteem. The practice of composing extempore verse was also sustained, and in this connection they indulged in a game at the ceilidh that was both entertaining and instructive. The conventional procedure was for a member of the party to go outside, and, having secured the dried skin of some animal in an outhouse, he would cover himself with it, and re-enter the dwelling-house. At his approach the inmates would feign fright, and all rush outside. Once there, the outer door was closed, and none was re-admitted until he had composed a stanza or two on a theme suggested by the guisard. At Hallowe'en, and on other occasions of festivity, this custom was often observed, so that people acquired wonderful skill in the art of versification. Adverting to this penchant of theirs, Martin remarks: "Both sexes have a quick vein of poesy, and they compose pieces which powerfully affect the fancy."

MUSIC.

The same author refers to their intense fondness of music; and he even goes the length of asserting that he had observed that "several of their children, before they could speak, were capable of distinguishing one tune from another, and appeared uneasy until the tune they fancied best was played. Several of the people invent tunes, which are very taking in the south and elsewhere."

The playing of the harp was rapidly falling into desuetude during the early decades of the eighteenth century; but another instrument, namely, the fiddle, was steadily rising in popular favour. The bagpipe, however, continued still to hold a paramount place in the regard of the people; and although the MacCrimmons did not then possess the influence they formerly enjoyed, their college was still attended by many aspiring young pipers. The MacDonalds maintained a piper in each of their three baronies, namely, Sleat, Trotarnish, and North Uist. We knew that in the year 1723 the clan piper in the first was a Malcolm Macintyre, and, like all his colleagues, he was given a portion of land free in virtue of his office. In Trotarnish lived the principal pipers of that clan, the MacArthurs, who maintained the hereditary succession here for several generations. They farmed as a freehold the district of Peingown, in Kilmuir, where a hillock, called Cnoc Phàil, is still pointed out as the rendezvous where these pipers and their pupils delighted to practise. An Angus MacArthur piped the MacDonalds of Skye to the onset on Sheriffmuir, while his son, Charles, practised his profession in the service of Sir Alexander MacDonald during the student days of the latter in St. Andrews, much to the entertainment of the lairds of Fife. In 1726, a salary of £66 13s 4d was paid to this piper, a perquisite that was additional to his tenure of Peingown.

Just as the language and the dress of the Gael were proscribed in 1746, so also was the bagpipe, it being held to be an "instrument of war." The mere fact that it was then placed under a ban was not, however, the reason for its decline; rather is that to be sought in the great changes that occurred in the Highlands after "The '45," when the chiefs degenerated into landlords, and their cadets into mere farmers. The old order was changing, and in the new the piper held but a very subordinate position compared to that which he had occupied in the past.

It is said that, about this time, one of the wandering pipers had called in his old age at a castle in Skye, where he was denied that place of honour which custom had always accorded him in the past. Instead of being ushered into the presence of his chief and his guests, as was formerly the wont, he was now relegated to the servants' hall in the basement of the mansion. The proud piper rankled under the indignity that was put on his profession; and when a liveried menial announced in English that the chief, who was dining in the room immediately above this hall, had expressed a request that a tune or two be played, the slighted musician answered in Gaelic: "Abair ris matà, gur h-ann a b'àbhaist dhòmhsa bhi toirt aoibhneis lem' cheòl do chluais athar anns an talla so; agus nach 'eil mi nise nam' sheann aois a dol a chur a leithid de dhimeas air a' phiobmhóir 's gu'n téid mi 'ga séideadh suas 'na dheireadh-san!"

THE CHIEFS.

Long before the last Jacobite rebellion, there was a marked inclination on the part of the Highland chiefs, and especially of those of Skye, to ape the customs and the manners of the South.

This tendency was always bemoaned by those who cherished the traditions of the past, and who wished to preserve the identity of the Highland race. Our bards were constantly voicing notes of warning to the chiefs who forsook the interests of their clan for the glamour of the courts. Allusion has already been made to the works of Morrison, the blind harper of Dunvegan, to Lachlainn MacThearlaich Oig, and to others, where references are made to these changes in manners; and the strictures passed by men such as Rev. Dr. Donald MacQueen of Kilmuir, who valued the native ways and the native culture, on those chiefs who, "at the instigation of luxury and the ambition of cutting an unmeaning figure in the Lowlands, were altering the tones of society," are highly justified.

Still, among a primitive people, tradition dies hard; and it was not until long after "The '45" that the ancient veneration for the chiefs began to show signs of decline among their clansmen. The prerogative of heritable jurisdiction, which the chiefs exercised in their own dominions, vested them with the power of absolute sovereignty over their people; and there can be no doubt that they lost much in prestige when they were deprived of that authority in the year 1747. It cannot, however, be said, with any show of fairness, that that power had been abused by the chiefs during the centuries they had possessed it; for, as General Stewart remarks, "nothing can be more erroneous than the prevalent idea that a Highland chief was an ignorant and oppressive tyrant, who regarded the abject submission of his followers with relentless cruelty and vigorous oppression." Far from being an irresponsible autocrat, the chief was at all times expected to seek counsel from the cadets of the clan, and he was invariably guided by their advice. His conduct was closely watched by these elders; and should he commit any action that might be construed as being derogatory to the good name of the clan, or unworthy of his own high office, his people had no compunction in bringing him to book, and even threatening him with deposition.

At the same time, if their chief should find himself in straitened circumstances, even on account of an extravagant manner of life, the members of the clan failed not to interest themselves in his affairs, and even to impose on themselves a temporary increase in their rent, in order to mitigate, if possible, his pecuniary embarrassments. Their regard for the chief bordered even on reverence, and Martin observes: "The people conclude grace with a petition to God for his welfare and prosperity."

And a close intimacy existed between the chief and his clansmen, even to the very lowest grade. When they were free from the presence of strangers, they mingled on terms of unrestrained familiarity, and, indeed, behaved towards one another like the members of one family. This relationship was all to the good; for, since the chiefs and their tacksmen were often men of lofty character and fine culture, it was but natural that their influence should permeate the tribe; and to it may be attributed the undoubted polish in speech and manner that distinguishes a Highlander from persons in the same station in other parts of the country. Anent this we find the observation in Dalrymple's "Memoirs": "The Highlanders, whom more savage nations call savage, carry, in the outward expression of their manner, the politeness of courts without their vices, and, in their bosoms, the high point of honour without its follies."

Food, etc.

The common people then seldom partook of more than two meals a day; and the regimen was characterised by little or no variety. The chief articles of their dietary consisted of bread made of oats, or of barley; brochan, which was a thin gruel, and often taken with bread; potatoes, which had been introduced towards the end of this period; colewort, butter, cheese, milk, and fish. The poorer people seldom tasted any kind of meat, despite the large herds that were reared; for we have it on the testimony of Martin, himself a native of the island, that "there is no place so well stored with such great quantities of good beef and mutton, where so little was consumed by eating."

During the lean months of the winter and spring, bread and gruel formed the staple food of the vast majority in the community, and even in the houses of the tacksmen, bread, cheese, and milk were considered to be the choicest fare.

Some tasty dishes were produced from a varied treatment of milk. One of the commonest, and certainly the most favoured of these preparations, was called "Omhan," which means "froth." In making this decoction, milk, or whey, was boiled, and vigorously stirred with a crossed stick until it was converted into a frothy substance that was commended for its rare palatability and its sustaining qualities. When the meal and the potatoes had been exhausted, this omhan was for months their only article of food. And it then happened too often that even milk failed them; for, when the winter was severe, and the small stock of provender had been used up, the emaciated cattle went dry. In such a contingency, the people had recourse to the bleeding of young and healthy animals; and this blood was compounded and boiled with a pinch of meal.

On such occasions, also, they resorted frequently to the shore for shellfish; and it is no doubt from those times of extreme privation that the well-known proverb dates: " 'Nuair a' bhios an crodh caol, bitheadh a' maorach reamhar"—a saying which aptly enunciates a physiological law, and, at the same time, displays an abounding faith in an all-seeing Providence. In commenting on the shore-life of Skye, Martin observes: "Mussels abound in Bernisdale; and this was a great support to many poor families in the neighbourhood in the late years of scarcity." They made a broth of limpets and milk, and it was held to be a savoury and sustaining food. The acuteness of the destitution of those times may be finally exemplified by a further quotation from Martin, who is the principal authority for the social conditions that prevailed in the early years of this century. Alluding to the wholesomeness of a well-known spring in Uig, he asserts: "The waters of Tobir Telliebrek in Uig, with dulse, would serve as food for a considerable time, as was experienced in times of war."

Owing to its exorbitant price, very little salt was used, and what little was imported of that commodity was sedulously husbanded for the sole purpose of preserving the butter, as, without it, that article of food could not be kept for any length of time. To inhibit putrefaction in cheese, they sometimes used the ashes of sea-ware; but for other perishable foods they employed no preservative whatsoever. By special methods of curing they were able to season fish that was caught after the middle of September, for a period of eight months. According to Martin, "they used no art in it, but take out their guts, and then, tying a rush about their necks, hang them by pairs, from a rope made of leather, across the house."

There was one article, however, in the importation of which no sparingness was observed. This was the foreign brandy, the drinking of which, together with the native whisky, made for great intemperance. Their inordinate craving for these stimulants was fostered by the belief that it was necessary to partake of them in order to counteract the baleful effects on their health resulting from the moistness of the climate. This last was often made the pretext for excessive indulgence, with the usual repercussion on the morals of the people. Riotous scenes were too often a feature even of solemn assemblies; and even funerals were made the occasion for renewing old feuds and originating new ones. We have already referred to the unseemly incidents witnessed at the funeral of Sir Alexander MacDonald of Sleat. The cost of the ceremony is stated to have been £2645, and it can be safely asserted that most of that amount was due to the single item of drink. Indeed, the quarrels that occurred among the people in those times were so frequent, and so fierce, that when a party set off in procession to a marriage, or a burial, the boys of the district often followed, in expectation of the fights that ensued before the company dispersed.

Their immoderate habits were no doubt due, to a certain extent, to the prevailing conceit that, if a vessel were once broached, it would be an insult to the host if it were not drained dry. It was considered to be the proper thing to continue drinking until all were quite intoxicated; for to refrain before that stage was attained was held to be unmanly. It is unlikely that Martin exaggerates the custom that ruled in his own day when a party of men once began drinking. He says that two men were detailed to attend at the door, and that their duty was to carry off the revellers, one by one, on a barrow, as they succumbed to inebriation, and deposit them in some chamber, where they were left until they should become sober; and "the carriers returned again and again to their posts, and so carried off the whole company!"

THEIR DAILY TOILS.

Most of the agricultural labour, certainly that which entailed the greatest drudgery, was still done by the women. And it was a toil self-imposed, and ungrudgingly performed; for, by their view of life, much of the work of cultivation, and the tending of crops, were held to be unworthy of a man, whose prerogative it was to guard his chief and the clan. Hence the digging of the soil, the reaping of the crops, the cutting of peats, and the bearing of burdens, were the lot of women; nor did any one think of the cruelty or the shame of it. In addition, they plucked heather for the purpose of making ropes; and when thatch was required for the houses they had to cut rushes or sedge, which they carried home in large bales, often for long distances. At home, again, their work was never done—grinding with the quern; although, when much meal was to be ground, they went with the grain to the nearest water-mill, there being then several on the island. The women prepared the wool and the lint for cloth; they dyed and fashioned the fabrics, and, in spite of all their toil, they not only sang at their work, but composed appropriate songs as well.

About the middle of the century a new industry was introduced that was to prove a great blessing to many people while it lasted. This was the manufacture of kelp by the calcining of the shore tangles, and all classes took part in the work. At first the price was less than £1 per ton; but by 1755 it had risen to £3 10s. The real boom in this industry set in after Culloden, when, towards the end of the century, the price rose to the phenomenal figure of £22 a ton.

About the end of this period another industry had just reached Skye, and it was to prove of far-reaching consequence in the life of the people. There had sprung up in England, and especially on the continent of Europe, a brisk demand for Scotch wool, with the result that the whole outlook of farmers was radically changed. The effect of this phase of the evolution of society was, of course, unfelt in any aggravated form until the later part of this century, and its baleful influence on the lives of the people will be seen when we come to deal with the evictions of that period.

TRADE.

There were then no "made" roads in Skye, the principal tracks that existed being due primarily to the treading of droves of cattle on the way to the Lowland markets. Large numbers of horses and black cattle were still sent south, and were exported from Skye by way of the narrows of Kyle Akin, or Kyle Rhea. Across these straits the animals were made to swim; and as soon as "slack" water supervened the work of ferrying began. The animals were bound together in files of five, the tail of the one in front being tied by a rope of heather, or of straw, to the muzzle of the one behind it; and the first of the line was fastened to the stern of a boat that was rowed across the sound with its trail of cattle behind it. By this means, as many as 100 animals could be transferred to the mainland by one boat in the course of a single day.

The trek to the south was generally made in autumn, when animals were in the best condition. The markets to which they were brought were those of Crieff and of Falkirk; and we have it on record that, at the former place, in the year 1723, English dealers bought 30,000 black cattle for as many guineas, "an amount of money the Highlanders had never seen before."

We have seen that local fairs had been instituted towards the end of the seventeenth century, and that they were held at Portree twice a year, namely, in May and in August. To these markets was brought the varied produce of the island, consisting for the most part of horses, cows, sheep, goats, hides, wool, butter, cheese, and dried fish. In the transactions that ensued, most of the business that was done between local dealers was by the system of bartering; there was then little circulation of specie in Skye. Indeed, such was the dearth of cash in the island at that time, that people experienced the greatest difficulty in finding enough money to pay their servants' yearly wage, or to buy any article for which they could not give some other commodity in exchange. When, about fifteen years after this period ends, Boswell succeeded in securing twenty-one shillings in bullion in Portree, such a large amount of money in the possession of one person was "thought to be a wonderful store."

There were, of course, no shops in the island then, for the need for such institutions had not yet arisen, as practically all the necessaries of life were produced on the island.

AGRICULTURE.

Although few changes fall to be recorded in agricultural methods during this period in the history of Skye, there are certain features that clearly mark it off from its predecessor. These are the institution of the crofting system and the first tentative beginnings in the payment of rent in money, and not in kind.

The crofting system, as now known, was introduced about the beginning of the eighteenth century, the first mention we find of it in Skye being in the year 1718. This was in the reign of Sir Donald MacDonald, the son and heir of "Do'ull a' Chogaidh," who sub-divided some large tacks among a community of tenants. These paid their rent in kind, or by service, directly to the chief; and although these exactions were originally never enforced with any stringency, they were increased little by little, until, by the end of this period, the tenants were unable to discharge their obligations. There were crofters on the lands of the tacksmen as well; and their lot was often worse than that of those who were directly under the chief. The service rendered to the tacksman by his tenants was called "Caraiste," in contra-distinction with "Bòrlanachd," which was the name given to the labour due to the chief.

These services often demanded so much of their time that tenants had little opportunity to attend to the cultivation of their own allotments. That work was not, however, neglected. It devolved, as a matter of course, on the women folk, who carried it on with their customary assiduity. So well indeed was it done that travellers to the Highlands at that time were greatly impressed by the amount of labour that was given to the fields; and one, Captain Burt, who had lived a considerable time in the North, says: "Every available patch was cultivated by the spade, and crops of oats and barley were grown."

It would appear, too, that the soil was then fairly responsive to tillage. Martin observes that, in plentiful seasons, such large crops were produced in Skye that the natives were able to export considerable quantities to the mainland of Scotland; and he adds: "I have an account that a small tract of ground in Scorrybrek yielded one hundredfold of barley." But such periods of plenty were few and far between.

As might be expected in an age when people were dependent solely on their own production, great privations were endured when weather conditions were unfavourable to growth. The years 1715 and 1717 are especially mentioned as seasons which were so very severe that the people could not secure what meagre crops did grow. During the winters of these years great losses were sustained in stock, for the practice of housing the cattle had not then been instituted, and there was no provender to eke out what little the animals could cull for themselves. Conseqently, the cattle that did survive became "mere skeletons in the spring, when many of them were not able to rise from the ground without help."

The damage wrought by the storms of these years was long remembered in Skye, and its incidence was heaviest in the district of Trotarnish, where, it is said, "the sea overflowed parts of the country, breaking down many houses to the hazard of lives, and the impairing of lands." There is on record a plea by the tenants and the wadsetters of that area to their chief in 1721, beseeching him to lower the rent on account of the extreme poverty occasioned by an "unusual murrain" in the year 1716, but more especially by a similar calamity in the spring of 1720, whereby they lost "485 horses, 1027 cows, and 4556 sheep." The petition was drawn up and signed at "Renedray," by "D. MacDonald, Sartil; J. MacDonald, Lachasay; D. Nicolson, Culnacnock; J. Nicolson, Scoudiborow; J. MacDonald, Rigg; J. Martin, Floridarry; J. MacDonald, Valtos; A. MacDonald, Knockowe; A. MacDonald of Bornaskitag; D. MacLeod, Ormisgarry; N. MacDonald, Totscor; A. MacDonald, Glenmore; J. MacDonald, Cuidrach; Eugene MacDonald, Yr., of Glenmore; Aeneas MacQueen, Prabost; Allan MacQueen, Kingsborow; An. MacDonald of Eskedle; Jo. Nicolson, Glenmore; J. MacDonald, Libost; H. MacLean, Gerich; A. MacQueen, Totarome; Margt. MacDonald, Mogstadt; J. MacDonald, Grealine; Rev. Archd. MacQueen, Snizort; Rev. K. Beaton, Kilmuir."

In the attestation, the appellants proceed to observe that the factor of MacLeod had, for similar reasons, lowered rents to an aggregate of £110. Following this petition we find that, in the year 1719, the chief, Sir Donald MacDonald, wrote to his agent in Edinburgh, informing him that he had been constrained to grant a temporary rebatement in rents to his vassals in Trotarnish, "on account of their great poverty," accruing from the phenomenal casualties in stock that they had recently sustained.

The runrig system of tenure was, of course, still generally the vogue; and its continuation served, for a time, to check that process of the sub-division of land that was to become such a flagrant evil during the period the boom in the kelp industry prevailed.

Since most occupiers of land possessed no lease for their holdings, they could, of course, be displaced at any moment at the whim of their superior. The direct result of this state of insecurity was that land was seldom developed to its full capacity; and among many of its other attendant evils may be cited the fact that no effort was made to improve the soil by drainage, and no provision was made for the preservation of the growing crops. In some cases, however, when a new tenancy was entered upon, a contract was concluded according to the following custom: A withe and a wisp of straw were handed by the owner to the new occupier. The latter immediately returned the tokens; and we have it on the testimony of Martin that this agreement was as binding "as if they had signed any deed."

IMPLEMENTS.

As an implement of tillage, the spade was held to be far superior to the plough; for it was found by experience that the crop that followed the operation of ploughing was invariably lighter than that which grew on land that was dug by the spade. This was, of course, as might be expected, owing to the very crude construction of the ploughs of those days, when the marking implement and the moulding one had not yet been combined.

The harrow then in use was entirely of wood. The front portion was studded with two rows of wooden teeth, behind which was fixed a line of rough heather, or brushwood, for the purpose of smoothing the soil. In most cases the harrowing was done by human labour, frequently by women; but occasionally a horse was pressed into service, the method of yoking being to tie the implement to the animal's tail by means of a rope of hair or of rushes.

GENERAL CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE, THEIR SUPERSTITIONS, ETC.

Owing to the life they led, and the plain fare on which they lived, the people were then very healthy; and we find Martin stating that "there is no place of the habitable globe where so few bodily imperfections are to be seen, or where the children go more early." A terrible toll was, however, taken of the lives of the people by the dread epidemics of smallpox and fevers; of the latter, scarlet fever had made its advent to the island in the first years of the eighteenth century. Owing to the lack of medical skill, and the want of adequate provision for the physically disabled, the span of life was, on the average, shorter than at present, while individual longevity was much the same as it is to-day.

The practice of empiricism by the Beatons was now on the decline, though, according to Martin, they still "wrought many cures." People placed great faith in superstitious remedies; among other methods of treatment, the water of sacred wells was supposed to have great potency as an antidote to disease.

Of such places, the most frequented was Loch Shiant, in Trotarnish. Invalids bathed in it, and they drank of its waters that were held to be a panacea for all ills. It was, in truth, a Skye "Siloam"; and those who stirred its waters, thereby, as they thought, drowning the spirit of their disease, made offerings in the form of strips of coloured cloth, pins, brooches, and other trinkets, to the presiding divinity of the place. The trout in this lake none would deign to touch; and the coppice, growing nearby, was held to be so sacred that no native would allow a branch of it to be broken. Among other wells that possessed healing virtues, one was reputed to be in Uig, and another in Kilbride, in the parish of Strath.

The methods adopted for the treatment of certain diseases are so diverting as to merit some mention here. For those afflicted with "depression of the spirits," recourse was had to two forms of "cure," in each of which the principle was to impart sudden fear to the patient. In one case the prescription was to take him out to sea in a boat, throw him unawares into the water, and expect the immersion to cure him. In the other, he was taken to a blacksmith in Kilmartin, at this time the thirteenth of his line, who claimed to possess the art of healing this trouble. Here the sufferer was laid on the anvil, face upwards, while the powerful son of Vulcan raised the sledge-hammer aloft, and, bringing it down with tremendous force, and a threatening grimace, stopped short when almost in contact with his client's brow, "else," as Martin has it, "he would be sure to cure the patient of all diseases!"

These empirics accompanied the practice of their art by appropriate incantations, numerous examples of which could be cited. Thus, in applying the recognised remedy for the cure of worms in the human body, they invariably recited the following stanza:

"Mharbhainn dubhrag, 's mharbhainn doirbheag,
'S naoi naonar de a seòrsa;
Is fiolan crion nan casan lionmhor,
Bu mhór pianadh air feadh feòladh."

Superstitious beliefs still exercised a powerful influence on the mind of the people, and it may help to throw some light on the psychology of our race at that time if a few instances are given. At least once a week a pilgrimage was still made to the "Clach na Gruagaich" of the district, into the hollow of which a libation of milk was poured, accompanied by an incantation to the female deity that presided over the yield of the flocks and the herds. This custom was continued long after "The '45," although the Rev. Dr. Donald MacQueen informed Dr. Johnson in 1772 that he had succeeded in stamping it out in his own parish.

Other rites also were performed with a view to the safeguarding of the cattle from ill. They still encircled them with torches, and the ceremony was most efficacious, as they thought, at Whitsuntide, when a similar treatment was accorded the growing crops. Should an epidemic, such as "murrain," break out among the cattle, a quaint rite was performed in order to produce an antidote. The men of the township, to the number of 81 (naoi nao-nar), worked, nine at a time, rubbing two planks of hazelwood together in the endeavour to generate fire. When they succeeded, water was boiled over the flame, and they sprinkled it on the herd, at the same time chanting an incantation, as follows:

"Trath thréigeas buair am buabhal bhò,
Trath thréigeas cuanal an cual chrò,
Trath dh' éireas ceigich ri beinn a' cheò,
Treòir nà Trianaid bhi triall 'nan còir."

Even Martin believed in the efficacy of this form of quackery.

Two fossils that are very common in Skye and the adjacent islands, namely, Ammonites and Belemnites, were much used in animal pharmacy. When cattle suffered from local pains, the part affected was vigorously massaged with water in which the "crampstones," as the former were called, had been steeped for hours; while in the case of the latter, or the "botstones," as they were termed, the water in which they were steeped, when drunk by horses suffering from worms, was held to be a safe and certain remedy.

People still believed that the "toradh," or the essence of the milk, could be charmed away by various agencies—the "evil eye," witches, and also by bulls that sometimes swam across intervening seas and returned with the stolen virtue to their own pastures. As a preventative against contingencies of this kind, amulets were placed in the bottom of milk-vessels, and one of the most potent was held to be the root of the groundsel. In order to suppress this superstition, the Rev. Dr. Donald MacQueen was wont to challenge any person in his congregation to charm the milk away from his cows; but he was forced to confess that even such a demonstration on his part was quite ineffectual in eliminating this strange belief.

Calves born with slits in the lobes of their ears, or with very minute organs of hearing, were believed to be the offspring of the "corc," or "water-bull," and were accordingly said to be "corc-chluasach" or "torc-chluasach." Animals with such deformities were supposed to be ominous of disaster to the herd. They were, therfore, despatched at birth, and their bodies were consigned to the sea, or to the nearest river. These are the cattle called "corcyfyre" by Martin in his "Account of the Western Isles."

In commencing any work they held that, if the undertaking were to be successful, it was essential to turn sunwise, a procedure which was invariably observed. A tacksman, who then lived on Fladda Chuain, and who faithfully followed the ancient custom, was wont to justify his action by declaring that, on their first appearance there from their winter haunts, the "coulter-nebs," or puffins, encircled the island three times "deiseal," or sunwise; and on their departure again, in the early autumn, they performed similar evolutions.

Certain inanimate objects were supposed to possess oracular powers, and were resorted to for the purpose of determining the course of future events. Thus, in a chapel dedicated to St. Columba, and situated on Fladda-Chuain, there was a stone in the altar that was held to possess the property of affecting the weather. Hence those who frequented the surrounding seas often resorted to it, in the hope of finding out the weather conditions that were likely to ensue. If storms persisted for some time, or winds were contrary, they repaired to the island and washed the stone. They believed that this formality would ensure auspicious weather. So great, indeed, was their veneration for this stone that Martin says "they swear decisive oaths on it."

Oaths sworn on the naked dirk were held to be peculiarly binding. It is on record, for example, that when Donald Roy MacDonald wished to go to Fladda-Chuain from the island of Troday, in order to ascertain if the Prince had arrived there, he asked the tenant of the latter island, one Alexander Cameron, to accompany him. Cameron demurred, alleging as his reason his fear that the government might punish him by depriving him of his lands. Thereupon Donald Roy caused him to swear on the dirk that he would reveal to no one what he had been asked to do; and we have it on the testimony of him who administered the oath that "it was kept with the utmost fidelity." In commenting on this incident, Bishop Forbes observes: "The taking of an oath upon the holy iron is as sacred among them as swearing upon the Bible." Another means of binding people to secrecy, and concerted action, was to sip a drop of each other's blood taken from the little finger.

CHAPTER XIII.

FAMILY HISTORY, 1746-1800.

THE MACDONALDS.

WE have brought the history of the MacDonalds to the death of Sir Alexander, in the year 1746. This chief was twice married, first to Ann Erskine, who was the daughter of a Senator of the College of Justice. She died within a year after marriage, and a notable poem was composed by the "Piobaire Dall," who happened to be at Armadale on Sir Alexander's return from London to learn of the death of his young wife. It is called "Dàn Comhfhurtachd," or "Song of Consolation"; and it is written in the loftiest strain of the famous piper-bard. There was one child of the marriage, who died young.

Sir Alexander's second wife, the handsome and accomplished Lady Margaret, was the daughter of the Earl of Eglintoun. Apart altogether from the role she played in the adventure of "The '45," she had other qualities that endeared her to her people. She was the mother of two sons, James and Alexander, both of whom were successively chiefs.

Sir James, the elder, was born in 1741, so that he was only five years of age at the time of his father's death. During his minority the management of the affairs of the estate were in the capable hands of his mother, Lady Margaret, and her faithful steward, Alexander MacDonald of Kingsborough. The young heir was educated at Eton. Thence he proceeded to Oxford, where he had a brilliant career in science, languages, and in philosophy. Of him General Stewart of Garth says: "He was one of the most accomplished men of our own or of any other country"; and Sir Robert Douglas of Glenbervie, the compiler of "The Scottish Baronage," asserts that, for "knowledge of the liberal arts and sciences, he was inferior to none of his contemporaries." Many of our own people bore witness to his high character and outstanding genius; chief of whom the bard, John MacCodrum, whom Sir James himself so generously maintained, composed a well-merited panegyric on him, a portion of which is as follows:

> "Gur h-innealt' an connspunn
> Ceann-cinnidh Chloinn Dòmhnuill.
> Fear iriosal, stòlda,
> Gun tòir air an àrdan:
> Eireachdail, coimhliont',
> Soilleir an eòlas,
> Canar 'n am togbhail ris
> Bòcan mo làmhsa;
> Cùirtear na sìobhaltachd,
> Tlusmhór ri dìlleachdain,
> 'S cuimhneach air airidh."

By way of illustrating his linguistic attainments a story is still told in Skye to the effect that, when Sir James was in Rome seeking health during his last and fatal illness, the Pope sent a cardinal to interview the young nobleman whose praises were on the lips of all who valued learning. The legate was commissioned to find out if the fame that had gone abroad of his extraordinary scholarship was in reality true. When interrogated on his return as to how the Highland chief had acquitted himself in the tests of learning, the deputy replied: "I addressed him in seven different languages, and he answered me in all with fluency and obvious familiarity; and when I was about to leave his room, he gave an order to his servant in a language that I am sure nobody in the world understands but themselves."

His had never been a robust constitution; in his early adolescence the state of his health was such as to occasion grave concern to his friends. An accident, that happened to him on his estate in Uist, resulted in accentuating his infirmity. As he was one day hunting with a party that included Colonel MacLeod of Talisker, the rifle of the latter went off, and the discharge lodged in the leg of Sir James. Firearms in those days had no guard, and, in this instance, the unprotected trigger was moved by a sprig of heather that came in contact with it, thus accidentally firing the shot. It was, indeed, after this incident that the guard for the trigger was devised, and it is accordingly termed in Gaelic, "an t-iarunn fraoich," or the "heather-iron."

The wounded chief was carried to the house of a tacksman, Ewen MacDonald, a noted piper, who, in order to beguile the time for the patient, played many a piobaireachd, and even composed an ode called "Cumha na Coise," a quatrain from which is:

"Mo ghaol, mo ghaol do chas threubhach,
Do'n tig an t-osan 's am féile;
Bu leat toiseach nan ceudan,
'S na féidh bhi 'gan ruith."

That night crowds of the Uist folk gathered around Valay House, where their wounded chief lay, demonstrating against Colonel MacLeod, and even threatening reprisals for his supposed design on the life of Sir James. It required all the tact and powers of persuasion of which the tacksman was capable to convince them that the incident was quite accidental.

Shortly after he had left Oxford, Sir James travelled on the continent in the company of the versatile Topham Beauclerk, and that pioneer of the science of political economy, Adam Smith, who was then Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Glasgow. Such a distinguished company was bound to command respect wherever they went, and the deference shown to the young Chief of Clan Donald was no whit less than that accorded to his illustrious associates.

On his return from the tour, he set himself to improve the amenities of the estate and to better the lot of his people; for he had their welfare close to his heart. Among his many projects was the building of a large village at Portree, in order to stimulate local industries and to foster trade. As was natural in a man of such wide learning, he was eager to spread the influence of culture; and it was through his exertions that a large school was established at Portree, as the most convenient centre on the island for the education of the local youth. He was keenly interested in the "Ossianic Controversy," and was a strong protagonist of the view that the spirit of the old traditional barderie had been faithfully preserved by MacPherson. "I have," he once declared, while speaking of his family bard, John MacCodrum—"I have heard him repeat, for hours together, poems which seemed to me to be the same with MacPherson's translations."

In the winter of 1765 the state of his health was again precarious; and it was therefore proposed that he should make a tour of the Mediterranean countries in the course of the following summer. He set off with the intention of making Italy his headquarters; but the change failing to produce any betterment in his health, he died in Rome about the middle of July, 1766, "universally regretted," as the Rev. Donald Martin of Kilmuir put it in 1793, "both by his countrymen and by foreigners, who contended with each other who should pay the greatest marks of respect to his merit and his virtue."

He was only twenty-five years of age. But such was the fame of his learning, and the great respect in which he was held, that a public funeral was accorded him in Rome, greater than any that had graced a Protestant before his time.

On hearing of his untimely death, David Hume, the philosopher, wrote to Adam Smith: "We could not possibly have suffered a greater loss than that valuable young man"; while Dr. John MacLean, the last of the famous line of physicians of the MacDonald chiefs, and himself a man of deep erudition, declared: "The youngest of us will never see a person of warmer heart, better principles, or more inclined to do all the good in his power." Tributes to his name poured in from high and low. An anonymous bard composed a noble elegy, in which he laments the loss to the clan:

> "Craobh mhullaich a b' àirde,
> So bh' orra ri àireamh,
> Chaidh a gearradh gu làr dhuibh;
> Och nan och! rug am bàs ort cho òg";

and the family laureate, MacCodrum, sings with majestic power and genuine pathos of the passing of his great-hearted chief:

> "Ar toilinntinn, 's ar sòlas,
> Craobh a dhideann ar còrach,
> Ann an cathair na Ròimh air a chàradh."

An elegant monument, executed in Rome, was placed by Lady Margaret, in 1768, in the church of Kilmore, in Sleat. The epitaph was composed by his college friend, Lord Lyttleton; and it is such a magnificent and well-merited encomium that a portion of it is quoted:

"To the memory of

Sir JAMES MACDONALD, Bart.,

Who, in the flower of youth,
Had attained to so eminent a degree of knowledge,
In Mathematics, Philosophy, Languages,
And in every other branch of useful and polite learning,
As few have acquired in a long life
Wholly devoted to study.
Yet, to this erudition, he joined,
What can rarely be found with it,
Great talents for business,
Great propriety of behaviour,
Great politeness of manners.
His eloquence was sweet, correct, flowing;
His memory vast, and exact;
His judgment strong, and acute;
All which endowments, united
With the most amiable temper,
And every private virtue,
Procure him, not only in his own country,
But also from foreign nations,
The highest marks of esteem.

. . . .

He died at Rome
Where, notwithstanding the difference of religion,
Such extraordinary honours were paid to his memory
As had never graced that of any other British subject
Since the death of Sir Philip Sydney.
The fame he left behind him is the best consolation
To his afflicted family,
And to his countrymen in this isle
For whose benefit he had planned
Many useful improvements,
Which his fruitful genius suggested,
And his active spirit promoted,
Under the sober direction
Of a clear and enlightened understanding."

In accordance with his own expressed wish, that nothing he had written should be preserved, all his manuscripts were consigned to his coffin, and buried with him; and the regret will grow with the years that we have no record of the works of this outstanding genius. The brilliance of his natural parts, together with the amiability of his nature, and his untimely death, suggested to some the parallel history of the adopted son of Octavius Caesar; and hence his cognomen of "The Scottish Marcellus." Sir James was succeeded by his brother,

SIR ALEXANDER, THE NINTH BARONET.

This chief had been educated at Eton and St. Andrews, and he was a cultured man, widely read, and a genuine patron of learning. Boswell describes him as "a gentleman of talents"; and, as earnest of his ability, we have a Latin ode by him, written as a welcome to Dr. Johnson, which possesses considerable merit. He was also an accomplished musician, renowned alike for his taste and for his skill as a player of the violin. Two noteworthy compositions that will long remain among the prime favourites of fiddlers and pipers stand to his credit, namely, "Lord MacDonald's Reel" and "Mrs. Mackinnon of Corry."

While one would not go so far as to agree with Dr. Johnson's observation that his education had unfitted him for the position of chief, yet it must be conceded that he was wholly devoid of sympathy either with the culture, or the manner of life, of his own people. In his dealings with them he stood purely in the role of landlord; and he had no scruples about increasing their burdens when occasion presented itself. The demand for wool, and the boom in kelp, had furnished him with ample pretexts for raising rents; and he took the fullest advantage of the situation. Great resentment, therefore, prevailed against him, and several of his tacksmen actually united, pledging themselves to resist the payment of what they looked upon as unwarrantable impositions; while many were constrained to emigrate.

Owing to certain animadversions cast upon his conduct by Boswell, Sir Alexander suffered for a time under the shadow of unpopularity; and he smarted so bitterly under these strictures that, it is said, he even went so far as to threaten Boswell with physical violence. Caricatures appeared in the London press, making humorous allusions to the relations between the intermeddling litterateur and the offended chief. In one of these there was depicted a scribe, in a prayerful attitude, supplicating mercy from a resolute Highlander, who gripped him with one hand by the nape of the neck, while in the other he held a stout stick, with which he pointed to an unfinished manuscript. There can be no doubt that Sir Alexander fell far short of Dr. Johnson's conception of an ideal Highland chief; and, in view of the facts already stated, no one need wonder; but, on the other hand, it cannot be gainsaid that Boswell had been eminently indiscreet in giving the publicity he did to the over-zealous sentiments of his great master.

As is well known, Sir Alexander and his wife were on their way to Edinburgh on business, and they had just reached Armadale on the way south, when they were apprised of the arrival of Johnson and Boswell in Skye. They did all that was possible under the circumstances to entertain the distinguished visitors, even delaying their journey for a few days with that end in view. When Johnson and Boswell returned to Sleat from the north of Skye, the chief and his lady were in Edinburgh; but instructions had been left with their factor, James MacDonald, to attend to the convenience of the visitors, and they spent a cheerful night in the chief's house at Armadale, after they had left the manse of the Rev. Martin MacPherson in Ostig.

This "English-bred chieftain," as Boswell calls him, was raised to the peerage in 1776, as "Lord MacDonald of Slate, Co. Antrim," a designation that has no territorial identity. Whether it was in return for this honour or not, he busied himself at that time with the raising of a regiment on his estates for fighting in the American War of Independence. This was, however, a more difficult task than he had anticipated; for the traditional antipathy to the House of Hanover still prevailed, and many left the island rather than be party to this unpopular enterprise. Owing, however, to the effects of pressure and intimidation, and the still potent, though waning influence of a chief, he succeeded in mustering over 700 men from his own estates. The regiment was reviewed at Inverness in 1778, and towards the end of the year it was despatched to America. "The MacDonald Highlanders," as they were called, fought in several engagements, and, on their return to this country, they were disbanded at Stirling in the year 1784. Ten years later, when a real menace threatened the nation in the form of a French invasion, he helped to raise a defence corps, "The MacDonald Fencibles," that was commanded by Major John MacDonald of Kingsborough, one of the many soldier-sons of Flora MacDonald.

While he was still comparatively a young man, Sir Alexander died, in September, 1795. He was married to Miss Boswell of Gunthwaite, in Yorkshire, a lady of exceptional beauty. Of their family of ten children, the two older sons, Alexander and Godfrey, were chiefs, while a third, named Archibald, who was a posthumous child, rose to the now obsolete dignity of Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer.

THE MACLEODS.

The early chiefship of Norman has already been treated, and brought to the episode of "The '45." We have dealt with the role he played in that romantic adventure, and the effect it has had upon his name. He joined the Hanoverian forces, and took an active, if inglorious, part against the Prince; but the deed of deepest shame was his letter to Kingsborough, previous to Prince Charlie's arrival in Skye, advising him to take advantage of the government's offer of £30,000, and to betray the royal fugitive: "For I am persuaded he will pay you a visit. It will then be in your power (I hope you will use it) to aggrandise your family beyond many in Scotland." Such is the extract from it in "The Lyon in Mourning." Despite numerous requests, Kingsborough persistently refused to show the original copy to Bishop Forbes, the editor of that monumental work; but when the version quoted was read to Kingsborough he observed that it contained the substance of the text, "though the original was still worse." And when the whole history of this chief has been told, the conclusion will be inevitable that he was quite capable of work as debased as is suggested here.

We have followed the declination of his life to a state of prodigality and infidelity—his thirst for squandering, his utter recklessness in launching upon a life of gambling and riotous living. We have seen how he spent the vast fortune acquired by the industry and the devoted care of the faithful guardians of his nonage, and that his appellation, "The Wicked Man," was not undeserved. In an interesting account of the affairs of the clan, written by his grandson, the General, we find it asserted that "he was the first of our family, who was led by the change of manners, to leave the patriarchal government of his clan, and to mix in the pursuits and the ambitions of the world."

During the last years of his life the affairs of the estate were in dire straits. The burden of debt had amounted to the colossal figure of £50,000; and, in order to relieve the financial position, it was decided to raise the rents. Colonel MacLeod of Talisker, and the chief's grandson and successor, Norman, were commissioned to lay before the principal tenants the critical position to which the estate had been brought, and the necessity there existed for their aid to save the family name from ruin. They declared that disaster was to be averted only by a general raising of rents; but the promise was held out that, with the return of better times, the extra levies would again be removed. The candour and the disinterestedness of the pleaders so impressed their people that none dissented from the proposal; and, as we shall later see, the promise to grant relief from the additional burdens was duly implemented some years after the young man who made it was raised to the chiefship.

"The Wicked Man" died in 1772, and was buried in St. Andrews. He was predeceased by his only legitimate son, John, whose mother is reputed to have suffered such cruel treatment that she was forced to leave him; while her death was associated with mysterious circumstances. He had three daughters by his paramour, Miss Ann Martin, and two sons—men who rose to fame, namely, Major Alexander MacLeod of Lochbay and Captain MacLeod of Cyprus. The latter were both distinguished officers in the American War of Independence; and Major Alexander was married to Anne, the oldest daughter of Flora MacDonald. During the time the young chief, General MacLeod, was engaged in the foreign wars in India, Major MacLeod occupied Dunvegan Castle; and he was held in the highest esteem because of his urbanity and his munificence.

NORMAN, TWENTIETH CHIEF.

In 1772 the old chief was dead; and he was succeeded by his grandson, who also was called Norman. This was a man of great vivacity of temperament, sturdy physique, and pronounced ability. He had been educated at Edinburgh and St. Andrews; and before he had left these institutions he had given abundant evidence of a genuine desire for knowledge, and of distinct natural talents. Indeed, so impressed was Dr. Johnson by this youthful chief that he says of him: "I never met with a young man who had more desire to learn, or who had learned more." We have already seen that, out of regard to the confidence reposed in him, he had been delegated by his grandfather, when only eighteen years of age, to treat with his people in order to evolve ways and means of extricating the estate from its financial embarrassments; and what was a more difficult and delicate task—to check the tide of emigration to the colonies that was then in full flood. We have alluded to his success in inducing his clansmen to accede to an increase in rent; so that we do not wonder at the tribute paid him by the traveller, Thomas Pennant, who asserts: "To all the milkiness of human kindness, usually concomitant with his early age, is added the sense and firmness of more advanced years." He had compiled an interesting fragment of an autobiography dealing particularly with his early life; and while it displays the fine style of a highly cultivated writer, it, at the same time, furnishes us with evidence of a noble personality at once amiable and in deep sympathy with the lot of his own people. "A man whose personal character," says Pennant, "does him infinitely higher honour than the fortuitous distinction of his ancient and honourable descent."

That this chief was intent, heart and soul, on the promotion of the welfare of his people is shown by numerous sayings of his that are on record; and some are quoted in order to show the altruistic motives that activated him. "The government has deprived us of our ancient power," he once declared, "but it cannot rob us of our domestic satisfaction"; and, again, "I would rather drink punch in the homes of my people, than be enabled by their hardships to have claret in my own."

Despite his lofty motives, and unselfish actions, matters were not progressing smoothly. The people groaned under the burden of rents; and, as the demands of creditors were being insistently pressed, the prospect of relief for his tenants seemed very remote. In Boswell's "Journal" there occurs a significant statement that throws a flood of light on the relationship between the chief and his clan at that time. It is: "Talisker was grave and somewhat depressed by his anxious concern about MacLeod's affairs, and by finding some gentlemen of the clan by no means disposed to act a generous and affectionate part to their chief in his distress, but bargaining with him as with a stranger." But a man imbued with such independent spirit and altruistic disposition as MacLeod could not long abide a life of inactivity in which he was to remain a parasite on his people. In order, therefore, to help to dispose of the debt that had accrued on the estate, he decided to join the army. The American War of Independence had just then begun, and such a demand for recruits had set in that emigration was temporarily stayed.

He was commissioned with the rank of captain; but his regiment preceded him to America, as he had sustained a severe injury by being thrown from his horse while he was training. When, at last, he did embark, he took with him his young bride, the daughter of Mackenzie of Suddie, who had nursed him so carefully after his accident. On their voyage out their ship was captured by the American Navy, and they became prisoners of war. During his captivity, MacLeod made the acquaintance of George Washington, and a spirit of mutual affection and admiration was engendered in these great men that neither time nor distance could impair. It was during this time that certain parts of the estate, situated in the parish of Snizort, were sold to four different proprietors.

On the cessation of hostilities in America, Captain MacLeod, as he then was, returned home; and in 1780 he was made lieutenant-colonel, and given the command of the Black Watch, with which he was ordered to proceed to India. After a voyage of strange vicissitudes and misfortunes, he at length reached India towards the end of May, 1782.

The forces of Hyder Ali were causing trouble in Southern India; but his son, Tippo Sahib, with an army of 24,000 Hindus, and two corps of Europeans under the French general, Lally, received an effective rebuff at Panienè, when Colonel MacLeod, with a small contingent of 380 Europeans and 2200 Sepoys, inflicted on them a telling defeat.

It was of this wonderful exploit that Sheriff Nicolson sings so exultantly in his battle-song, "Agus ho Mhórag":

"Many were their deeds of arms
'Gainst the swarms of Hyder Ali.
Leagured close in Mangalore
Tippo and his hordes they baffled."

The following year brought him many moments of intense anxiety, as the army under his command was hopelessly inadequate to cope with the overwhelming forces that were then brought into the field against him by Hyder Ali. In 1783, MacLeod was raised to the rank of general, and was given charge of the Malabar Coast. But the situation was becoming more and more critical for him. At Mangalore he was hemmed in so closely by the Hindoo hordes that he was practically besieged for a period of nine months. Numerous sallies were made, and enormous losses were inflicted on the enemy, whose numbers seemed to be inexhaustible. The besieged suffered such privations, being forced to eat whatsoever came their way—dogs, cats, mice, and even snakes—that they were finally forced to surrender. The contingent was deservedly commended for the gallant defence they had set up, "one that has seldom been equalled, but never surpassed." Shortly after this a new army order came into force, establishing the principle of holding rank according to seniority, with the result that MacLeod found himself unfavourably placed; for officers, who had hitherto been his subalterns, now became his superiors. He, therefore, resigned his command and returned home in the year 1789.

During the period of his service in India, he had succeeded in amassing an enormous fortune, as much, indeed, as £100,000, according to one very reliable authority. But this man of lofty principles allowed himself to fall from grace; and, like his grandfather, he was caught by the pernicious lure of gambling, so that he soon lost the whole of his wealth.

In his absence, as we have already seen, his castle of Dunvegan was occupied by his natural uncle, Major Alexander MacLeod of Lochbay, and his wife, Anne, the daughter of Flora MacDonald. The utmost enthusiasm prevailed among the members of the clan when the news of the chief's home-coming became known, and elaborate preparations were made to celebrate the occasion with becoming ceremony. All over his estates bonfires were lit on the most conspicuous eminences; and as many of his clan as could avail themselves of the opportunity repaired to Dunvegan to accord in person their welcome to their chief.

The Rev. Dr. Norman MacLeod, "Caraid nan Gaidheal," in one of his memoirs says that he himself was on a visit to the castle at the time, and that the impressions then made on his youthful mind would remain indelibly imprinted there to the end of his days. And there was one feature of that memorable day that especially caught his fancy. That was the playing of a piobaireachd, by way of salute, by a certain Captain Donald MacCrimmon, who, however, was not of Borreraig.

But this chief, who, in his early years, had given such splendid promise, of whom Pennant has said, "He feels for the distresses of his people, and insensible of his own, with uncommon disinterestedness has relieved his tenants from oppressive rents, has received, instead of the trash of gold, the treasure of warm affections and unfeigned prayer"—this chief now could see nothing in the affairs of his clan to induce him to stay at home, and attend to their needs. His life abroad had unfitted him for the quiet conditions of existence in Skye, so that in the following year he entered the turmoil of politics. He continued to live beyond his means. The estate was sinking deeper and deeper in debt. While he was in America in 1779, his trustees sold Harris, Lyndale, etc.; and, in order to defray the electioneering expenses incurred in an unsuccessful contest during the year 1796, he was constrained to part with the district of Waternish, which had formed a portion of the family dominion since the time of Sir Rory Mor. In referring to these alienations, his son, John Norman, in his appendix to the fragment of autobiography by his father, from which we have already quoted, says: "He was the first of his family to part with his inheritance, and he was doubly grieved to find that he had impoverished his heirs without materially benefiting himself."

His oldest son, Norman, "Tormad nan tri Tormaid," was accidentally killed in 1799, on board the "Queen Charlotte," on which he was a lieutenant. This was a great blow to the chief, who was then in a weak state of health. With a view to recuperate, he was invited to pay a visit to the Channel Islands. On the way there he became gradually worse, and he had only arrived in Guernsey when he died at the early age of 47 years. He was succeeded, in the year 1801, by John Norman, the son of his second wife, Sarah Stackhouse, the daughter of a Member of the

Council at Bombay. The portrait of him by Raeburn shows a full face, with eyes set widely apart, a long nose, and the whole aspect cast in a melancholy mould.

As this brings the family history to a new century, it is now necessary to review the social conditions of the latter portion of the eighteenth century.

CHAPTER XIV.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS, 1746-1800.

Transition Stage.

THE episode of "The '45" has been taken to mark a period in our narrative; but it must at once be stated that, in spite of its effect on our island, the shadows of changes crowding the horizon of history at that time are not to be attributed wholly to that untoward event. For the changes in the social conditions of that time we have to seek for other causes; and these have been adumbrated in some of the previous sections. We have seen how the chiefs were being slowly, but surely, transformed from patriarchs to mere parasites on their clan. The old order was failing to interest them, for they were carried away by the glamour of the new.

But these revolutions did not immediately result from the unhappy hurly-burly of 1745; nor from its consequences, the confiscations, the Disarming Act, the ban on the Highland dress, and especially the breaking up of the clan system. Indeed, the sense of clanship was too deeply rooted in the heart of the Highlander ever to be affected by acts of repression, or the rigours of governmental laws. The disintegration of that institution could never have been wrought from without. Rather are we to seek for the causes of its dissolution in the changed attitude of the chiefs to their clan. Those laws that deprived the Highlanders of their arms and garb, and sought to abolish their language and their tribal institutions, would have gone far to destroy the feudal authority of the chiefs; but the fond attachment of the clan to its recognised head would have yielded to no laws. The chiefs themselves were the destroyers of that pleasing relationship. "Sucked into the vortex of the nation," as MacLeod of MacLeod asserts regarding the chiefs, in the account he has left of the conditions of that time, "and lured to the capitals, they degenerated from patriarchs and chieftains to landlords; and they became as anxious for the increasing of rents as the new-made lairds, the *novi homines*, the mercantile purchasers of the lowlands."

Mention has been made of the great demand in the south for the hardy black cattle of the north, and much prosperity accrued to the Highlanders in consequence. One of the direct results of this trade was an appreciation in the value of such land as could conveniently be used for the purposes of pasture. Those with means clamoured for more land, so that the value of grazing districts soon soared high. The temptation to sell to the highest bidder was naturally too strong for most landlords to resist, with the result that lands were now rented at double, and in some cases at treble, their original amount; and, according to Pennant, that increase had taken place between the years 1750 and 1770.

The change in the attitude of the chief was poignantly felt by the members of his clan. Now they saw that those time-honoured bonds, that knit all members of the tribe so closely together, were being snapped on every side. A feeling of restiveness began to manifest itself; and, rather than endure the new conditions, many were constrained to consider the painful alternative of emigration. To crown all, a succession of bad seasons, from the year 1770, supervened; and so great were the losses in stock, that many were unable to pay their rent. From this time onwards, for about one hundred years, the emigrant ship, with its broken-hearted freight, was to be a common object in the lochs of Skye. "That boat," as Boswell says in referring to the ship "Nestor" in Portree Bay, when he and Dr. Johnson arrived there in 1772, "that boat made a short settlement of the differences between a chief and his clan." According to the Rev. William Bethune, eight large transports sailed from Skye to America between the years 1771 and 1790, carrying away "about 2000 souls." The exodus on a large scale was at first confined to the district of Bracadale, whence 128 left between 1771 and 1774; 200 in 1788; and an equal number left for America two years later. Although Rev. Alexander Campbell declares that few had gone from the parish of Portree before 1791, it is known that several isolated families had emigrated from that district also. The youthful and the energetic among the emigrants were naturally stimulated to enthusiasm by their new environment; and the glowing accounts these men sent home, in many instances, induced others to follow.

Indeed, the depletion of the population had assumed such proportions that the government at length began to view the situation with alarm, especially after their experience of the value of Highlanders as combatants in the American War of Independence. At this time, also, the demand for black cattle began to show signs of waning in the south; and the chiefs began to see that a land without a peasantry would become valueless. Anent this there is a significant statement in "The Lyon in Mourning" to the effect that 2000 emigrants were preparing for their departure to the colonies from Skye. It proceeds: "They are all of the estate of Sir Alexander MacDonald, who may yet chance to be a proprietor without tenants. That they may go as a formed colony, a parochial preacher and a thorough-bred surgeon are to go with them"; and he adds the comment, "all this is due to the exorbitant rents for land."

That the burden of rent was the chief contributing cause to the evil of emigration cannot be gainsaid. Of that we have ample evidence. Johnson observes: "That the immediate motives of the desertion of the clansmen must be imputed to their landlords, may be reasonably concluded, because some lairds of more prudence and less rapacity have kept their vassals undiminished." Thus, prior to 1774, only one person had emigrated from Raasay; though a different tale remains to be told of that island during the succeeding century, when both there and in Skye the wholesale clearing of the people from the land was ruthlessly carried out.

While the more enterprising, and especially those with some means, had been seized by the "epidemic fury of emigration," as Dr. Johnson calls it, the poorest were not affected by it. When the clamour for land prevailed, and they were squeezed out, they went to swell the community of cottars by the shore. Among these a state of dire poverty prevailed till relief came to them by the advent of a new industry.

TRADE AND INDUSTRIES—KELP.

The manufacture of alkalies by the incineration of sea-ware, made its first tentative appearance in Skye about the year 1758. The price was then about £3 10/- per ton; by 1772 it had risen to £20; and in that year there was exported from Skye some 400 tons of kelp. About the year 1790, the amount manufactured in certain of the parishes of Skye was:—100 tons in Duirinish, 80 in Bracadale, 50 in Portree, 35 in Snizort (an insignificant quantity owing to the inaccessibility of the seaboard to the east of Trotarnish), and 100 tons in the parish of Strath.

Shortly after the American War of Independence kelp suffered a grievous decline in price, owing to the competition of Spanish barilla; and by 1793 it realised only between £4 and £5 per ton. This depression was but temporary, for, during the Peninsular War, the importation of barilla received a decided set-back; and at the beginning of the following century its value had again appreciated, so that by 1810 it was as high as £22 per ton. On the termination of the Peninsular War, the trade in Spanish barilla was again revived; and when, in 1817, the duty on salt was reduced, the kelp industry received another heavy blow. By the lowering of the import duty on barilla from £11 to £8 a ton in 1822, the manufacture of kelp was no longer a lucrative industry. True, it continued to linger on in a moribund state for many years after this; but the industry was of little moment, so far as Skye was concerned.

Following, as it did, on the decline of the boom in the sale of black cattle, all were induced to participate in the occupation of kelp-making during the period of its prosperity, with the result that farming was sadly neglected. The tacksmen, even, were not averse to engage in it; and the landlords were not slow in asserting their rights to exact fat royalties from those engaged in its manufacture on the foreshores of their estates. The rents of maritime farms were raised, and these new impositions were strongly resented by the people; for, as Johnson has it, "they considered the profits of the kelp as the mere product of personal labour, to which the landlord contributed nothing."

This new source of revenue led the landlord to set a higher value on those who helped to produce it, and as these in turn were assured a means of livelihood, the tide of emigration temporarily ceased to flow. Those engaged in the making of kelp could each earn from 1/6 to 3/- a week; and that was considered a fair income in those days. Early marriages thus became the rule; for all that was necessary for the establishment of a new home was the site for a lowly cottage by the shore. A great increase in the population ensued; and when, years afterwards, this source of subsistence failed, a state of terrible privation prevailed among those unfortunate people who were dependent upon it.

It should be noted that, where the industry of kelp manufacture was prosecuted, the elders of the district appointed a man, called "buachaille cladaich," whose duty it was to report the presence of wrack on the shore. He did so by raising a bundle of tangle on the top of a perch; and none was allowed to begin the gathering of the weed until all had assembled.

Fishing.

The fishing industry was then, as it was often afterwards, prosecuted with indifferent success in Skye. Those who speak of the state of fishing at that time deplore its failure, as compared with its prosperity in the past. Thus, Thomas Fraser, who compiled the "Old Statistical Account" for Strath, remarks that "herrings are not now in the lochs as formerly."

The truth is, however, that the industry was as inconstant then as it has proved to have been so often since that time; for, during this same period, there were occasions when the lochs of Skye yielded a prolific supply of herring. Another authority of those times, namely, Rev. Martin MacPherson, who was parish minister of Sleat, declares that he saw as many as "one hundred sail in Isle Oransay," engaged in fishing; and he adds that, among the herring "busses," there were several that had come even from the Baltic; while the traveller, Thomas Pennant, states that, as he was crossing over to Skye, he saw a fleet of "busses" at Kyle, "waiting for the herring that was late that year" (1770).

With the benevolent intention of fostering the fishing trade in Skye, the British Fisheries Society acquired land in Waternish in 1787 for the purpose of establishing a centre for the industry. The place chosen for the station was Stein, on Lochbay, where a quay was built, and stores and dwelling-houses were erected. A small plot of ground was allotted to each family, together with summer-grazing for a cow or two. This project, however, failing to answer the expectations of its promoters, owing principally to the high cost of salt, they were forced to abandon it in the following century at a loss of £1241. The houses of Stein were afterwards of use in providing accommodation for those who had suffered eviction during the clearances.

One of the chief reasons for the failure of the fishing industry then was the exorbitant price at which salt was retailed. Mr. Thomas Fraser, who wrote "The Old Statistical Account" for Strath, makes pointed references to the iniquitous salt-laws; and he remarks that it often happened that little of the commodity was procurable "at the very time the greatest shoals enter our lochs." The Rev. Alexander Campbell, afterwards parish minister of Portree, likewise inveighs against this impost; while the Rev. Malcolm MacLeod of Snizort declares: "There is much fish in Loch Snizort; but the country people, from the difficulty of procuring salt, have not reaped from it the advantages they might receive, were the Salt Laws such as to allow them to furnish themselves at an easier and cheaper rate." The price of salt in Skye was then 10/- per barrel; and an equal quantity of cured herring could seldom be bought at less than 19/-; although, according to Rev. William Bethune of Duirinish, consignments were often exported from his parish at 16/- per barrel. The last authority tells us that a small trade also existed in the exportation of other fish; and that about 20 tons of cured ling were annually sold from his own parish, at an average price of £13 per ton.

CATTLE.

The trade in the sale of black cattle attained its peak shortly after Culloden; and it was maintained at its high level, with scarcely an intermission, until the beginning of the nineteenth century. The number despatched to the southern markets seldom fell below 4000 head in an ordinary year; so that cattle-rearing may be said to have been the staple industry of the island at that time. In the best years the prices ranged from £2 to £3 per head, and Dr. Johnson mentions the fact that a cow was sold in Skye for the phenomenal sum of £5!

In view of the large numbers that were annually disposed of by sale, enormous herds must have been reared at that time in Skye and on the adjacent islands. A herd of about 400 animals, that had never been under the shelter of a roof, was maintained on the islands of Raasay and Rona; and of these, 100 were annually sold. The latter island was then uninhabited, except for one cow-herd, who was placed there in charge of 160 cattle that were grazed on the island.

A considerable amount of trade was carried on in the sale of horses, of which about 250 were yearly exported. Pennant says that he saw four score horses at Kyle that were being transferred to the mainland, four at a time, and made fast to a boat by means of halters of withies. The price then obtaining averaged about £3 10/-, with individual sales that, in rare instances, rose to £6 10/-. Sheep were sold at from 4/- to 6/-. Few were ever exported.

INDUSTRIES.

In those days very little trade existed in the importation of goods, for most of the articles used in the home, and on the farm, were produced locally by amateurs. They tanned raw hide into leather by means of the bark of the oak, or the birch, or the roots of the tormentil; and most could fashion the simple brogues, the making of a pair of which was the work of an hour. This artless shoe was stitched with thongs so loosely that, although it defended the foot from injury, it did not exclude the water. The Rev. A. Campbell of Portree states that there were three "brogmasters" in his parish about 1790; "but," he adds, "generally the people make their own brogues." The same authority tells us that the number of artisans who plied their trade in that parish was five carpenters, eight tailors, two weavers, twelve "weaveresses," and two blacksmiths. The last-mentioned trade had now fallen from the honoured state it enjoyed prior to the episode of "The '45." Even for some time after that event it remained a hereditary occupation; and a few members of the craft still occupied their lands free of all burdens in virtue of their office as armourers to their chief. The title had now, however, degenerated to that of smith. The ancestors of the MacLeods of Morvern acted in that capacity to the chiefs of Dunvegan; while the MacRurys performed similar services to, and enjoyed equal privileges from, the MacDonalds. The finely tempered blades they produced showed work of marvellous ingenuity; while their magnificently carved gunstocks, and wonderfully fashioned and embellished locks, were the expressions of an art that was soon to be irretrievably lost.

There were water-mills in plenty—two, at least, in every parish; and in good seasons they were kept busy grinding the home-grown grain. That the amount of meal thus produced was insufficient for the needs of the community is attested by the observations of ministers, who deplored the large importation of foreign meal into Skye. The Rev. A. Campbell says there were "five petty merchants in Portree"; and the prices that ruled for exchangeable commodities were as follows:—A boll of oatmeal cost from 17/- to £1 towards the end of this century, while potatoes were sold for 1/9 per barrel. Butter was 6d per lb., cheese 2½d, eggs 3d per dozen, a barrel of salt 10/-, and a pair of shoes cost 2/6.

It is of interest that practically all the gear used by fishermen was made in the homes of the people. Even the ropes in use were made from local materials, and the purple melic grass (*Molinia varia*) was considered then to be one of the best substances for the making of cordage, because of its toughness and its durability. Such ropes were also used as halters for horses; though in rare instances hair was used for the same purpose.

Bags were made of plaited rushes or of straw; and these were the receptacles for grain, etc. ("plàta ghràn"). The candle and the cruisie were manufactured locally; and, while the art of making the former was generally known, the latter naturally presented greater difficulties, so that its production was confined to the few who had a mechanical bent. Hitherto the cruisies had been brought from the south; but after "The '45" they were made by the smiths, and soon amateurs came to practise the art. These vessels, with wicks of the pleated pith of the tufted rush, in a bath of fish-oil, afforded the principal means of lighting in the homes of the common people then, and for some years thereafter.

Labour was then so cheap that a large staff of servants was employed by the more prosperous tacksmen of Skye. Pennant tells us that, in several houses, there were as many as twenty; and he was not slow in casting animadversions on their industry, or, rather, their lack of it; for they impressed him as "the laziest of creatures, for not one will do the least thing that does not belong to his own department." This calumniation is patently unmerited, and the character of the people is more justly described by one of our ministers, the Rev. William Bethune of Duirinish, who, writing in 1791, says: "The people are very industrious when working for themselves, but are lazy and indifferent when they are employed by others.

WAGES.

In some of the principal families of Skye, the wages of servants were still paid in kind, the women being given a sheep or two, whose wool they span and wove for their own clothing. In the wealthier households, however, a monetary payment was usually the rule. When hired for a year, men received from £2 10/- to £3 10/-, varying according to the extent of land allotted to them for their own exclusive use. The annual wage of a maid-servant ranged from 10/- to £1, "besides three pairs of shoes," a not inconsiderable burden on the employer of those days; for it was said by one of our parish ministers in 1791 that "servants' shoes cost their masters as much as their wages, twenty or thirty years ago." The increase in wages was due to the fact that, even at that time, men and women went south to engage in harvesting in Stirlingshire and the Lothians; while at home men could earn from 1/6 to as much as 3/- a week at kelp-making. For casual labour in husbandry, the daily wage for men was 6d to 8d, and half that amount for women, exclusive of victuals.

Numerous cottars then lived around, and on, certain farms; and these people were obliged to give three days' work per week to the farmers in return for the grazing of a cow and a small extent of ground for tillage. For his services, a married man, who contracted to serve the tacksman for a year, was entitled to grazing for two cows, twelve sheep, two horses; on two days a week he was free to labour on his own plot. Those who did not render service in lieu of the land they occupied did so in kind—corn, cattle, sheep, poultry, and even peat being contributed as rent.

Specie was still very scarce, and Boswell tells us of the great difficulty he experienced in securing even 21/- in silver. When at last he did succeed in getting that amount in Portree, "it was considered a great store." The Rev. Donald MacQueen, parish minister of Kilmuir, asserts that he often had great trouble to get enough money to pay the wages of his servants, or to buy such necessaries as food and clothing.

DRESS.

As has already been shown, the wearing of the Highland garb was prohibited in 1746; and it lay under proscription until the year 1782, when, owing primarily to the exertions of the Marquis of Graham, Parliament abrogated the Unclothing Act. The dissatisfaction that prevailed because of this new mode that was imposed upon them, was acute; and Dr. Johnson, and other travellers to Skye at that time, make frequent references to the resentment of the people. As was to be expected, the abolition of the detested measure was everywhere hailed with acclamation; and our bards gave expression to the general sense of relief in many a song. Chief among them Duncan Bàn, who thus refers to it:

"Deich bliadhna fichead is còrr,
Bha casag de'n chlò m'ar druim.
Fhuair sinn ad, agus cleòc,
Cha bhuinneadh an seòrs' ud dhuinn.
Bucaill a' dùnadh ar bròg,
'S e 'm barr-iall bhu bhòidhche leinn;
Rinn an droch fhasan a bh'òirnn,
Na bodaich de'r n-òigridh ghrinn."

Our own bard, William Ross, ardent Jacobite that he was, sings of the revocation of the ban with evident enthusiasm:

"Thainig fasan as an achd
A dh òrduich pailt am féile,
Tha éirigh air na breacanan,
Le farum treun na lapanaich,
Biodh oighean tapaidh sniomh, 's a' dath,
Gu h-éibhinn ait le uaill;
Gach aon dhiubh 'g éideadh a gaoil féin
Mar 's réidh leo anns gach uair";

while Kenneth Mackenzie is ecstatic in his praise of the garb of the Gael:

"'S e 'm feile preasach tlachd mo rùin,
'S an osan nach ruig ach a' ghlùn
'S còta beag nam basan dlùth,
'S boinead dhù-ghorm thogarrach."

The revival of the tartan so impressed the popular fancy that everyone was wearing it. The vogue had become so general that even the women wore it, and Ross sings of the Highland lass:

"Gur h-ainnir shoighn i,
Gun sgòd ri dhearc oirra;
'Na h-earradh glé mhath
De eudach breacanach."

Such household trappings as curtains for windows, and covers for furniture, were made of tartan; so that the craze became so strong as to overreach itself, with the result that, towards the end of the century, the fashion was suffering from a marked decline. It was, however, subsequently to be revived, on account of the exploits of the Highland regiments and the writings of Sir Walter Scott. Adverting to the use of the Highland dress in Skye about 1791, the Rev. Mr. Martin of Kilmuir says: "The common people still wear the Highland garb; and they adhere more closely to the ancient customs and manners than their superiors." We know, however, that those in better circumstances did wear it during the latter half of the century, albeit only on ceremonial occasions and on Sundays; and long even before the law against the garb had been repealed it was worn in Skye, especially by those who favoured the Jacobite cause. Boswell describes the dress of Allan of Kingsborough, the husband of Flora MacDonald, as follows: "A large blue bonnet, short brown coat, a tartan waistcoat with gold buttons, and a bluish phillibeg, with tartan hose." Some wore waistcoats with red flaps, and embroidered with gold lace; neither coat nor shirt having a collar.

The women of the upper classes dressed then much as they did elsewhere in Scotland. Gowns of dark silk were much in favour. The hair was drawn up tightly from the forehead, and made into a cue on the crown of the head; and it was profusely powdered. They covered the head with caps of muslin, fringed with deep flapping frills, and they were very fond of ornaments. Men were then, as at all times, ready to expose feminine foibles in dress. The Rev. A. Campbell, parish minister of Portree, writing 1793, says: "The women of Skye are excessively fond of dress, so that servants lay out all their wages that way."

The maiden was still marked by the snood, while the badge of matrimony, the curch, was then, as previously, worn ("ghiulaineadh bréid, uallach gu féill, William Ross sings of them). These linen kerchiefs were manufactured locally, there being then several fields of flax, and a few weavers of linen on the island.

MEANS OF COMMUNICATION.

Despite the large amount of intercommunication that existed between Skye and the Scottish mainland during the latter portion of the eighteenth century, there were then no roads as we know them now. Dr. Johnson says that when he made his memorable tour in 1773 there was not even a mark by which a stranger might find his way; and he comments on the very indifferent tracks that then existed, thus: "The way is so narrow that only one at a time can travel; and you cannot indulge in meditation by yourself, because you must always be attending to the steps which your horse takes." It is true that Pennant, who travelled in Skye two years previously, states that there was then "a good horse road between Kingsborough and Uig"; but that track, traces of which are still quite clear in places, was not a constructed road, being merely the beaten way that had been trodden for many a decade by the numerous droves from the fertile lands of the north of Trotarnish to the southern markets.

The first road contemplated for Skye was not decided on until the year 1799, when surveyors marked out a highway from Kyle Rhea, by Broadford, Sconser, Bracadale, and Dunvegan, to the recently established fishing village of Stein; but it was not completed until the succeeding century was well advanced.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century several of our ministers deplore the lack of roads in the island. According to Rev. Roderick MacLeod of Bracadale, neither a "turnpike" road nor a bridge had been built in his parish; and in Kilmuir a similar state of affairs obtained.

In a place where the coastline is so deeply indented as in the Isle of Skye, the lack of roads was not a serious deterrent to communication; for the people being skilful boatmen, much traffic was accordingly carried on by sea.

Until the end of the century there were only two post-offices in Skye—one at Dunvegan, between which and the Long Island a packet-boat plied once a fortnight, and the other in Sconser, at Tigh a' Phuirt, the site of the present shooting-lodge. Here was also an inn; a place where a considerable amount of business was then transacted. There was an inn also at Kyle Rhea, and a "tolerable" one at Portree, where Johnson and his fellow-traveller "had dinner *et praeterea nihil.*"

DIET.

The potato had been introduced into Skye shortly after 1750, and by 1770 it had already become the principal article of food. Travellers, who visited the island about that time, make frequent mention of the large quantity of it that was consumed, and the dependence of the people on it as their staple diet. Owing, however, to the defective drainage of the soil, the quality of the crop was very inferior.

Brochan, or gruel, with oaten bannocks, still held a large place in their bill of fare; and when the potato crop failed, or the supply had become exhausted, this constituted their chief food.

A certain amount of fish was consumed in its season; but the writers of the period deplore the small place that meat found in the people's menu; and they attributed the low state of vitality, that so often prevailed among the poor, to the lack of carbohydrates in their daily food. The flesh of the native sheep was highly nutritious and of savoury taste, and it was preserved for the winter by drying, as was also the flesh of the goat; but of these very little was used. It is a significant fact that the flesh of the pig, and of the eel, were both held in abhorrence by the people of Skye at that time.

Butter and cheese they had in fair abundance. The milk of cows, sheep, and goats was plentiful; and they had firm faith in the virtues of the last, as is indicated by the proverb, "Bainne nan gòbhar fo chòbhar 's e blàth, sud a chuir spionnadh 's na daoine a bhà." Bland, or fermented whey, was still a favourite drink, and a barrel of this healthful beverage was stored in every house.

It need not be wondered at that a people so dependent on what they themselves could raise should suffer great privations when the harvest proved a failure. A succession of unfavourable seasons, and that was a frequent occurrence, had terrible consequences for the community; so that, in the lean time of the year, many were faced with the prospect of starvation. Then they were driven to the shores, in hungry bands, to search for the shell-fish, which, together with dulse soup, formed their sole means of subsistence for several weeks. Pennant observes: "Hundreds thus annually drag through the season a wretched life, and numbers unknown, in all parts of the West Highlands, fall beneath the pressure, some of hunger, more of putrid fever, the epidemic of the coasts, originating from the unwholesome food, the dire effect of necessity." Thus, during the years 1768 and 1769, the weather had been so bad that the scanty crops the people grew could not be secured; and again, in 1772 and 1773, there was such scarcity in Skye that the government was constrained to act; as much as 44 bolls of oatmeal were assigned in the latter year to the parish of Duirinish alone.

In the years 1778, and again in 1782, great want prevailed. The last was remembered in Skye for many a generation as "Bliadhna na Peasraich," when pease meal alone was procurable. We find that strong appeals were made next year to the chief of the MacLeods, and also to MacDonald, to lower the rents they had recently raised; for, on the lands of the former, the tenants had lost "one third of their cattle, which constituted their substance," owing to the severity of the previous winter.

A significant statement is made by Pennant, the author already quoted, when commenting on the vicissitudes of existence in our island. "Golden seasons," he says, "have happened, when they had a superfluity, but the years of famine are as ten to one."

In the homes of the tacksmen the food was varied, including oaten and wheaten bread, flesh, fish, and plenty of eggs, butter, and cheese. It was the custom then to serve cheese at almost every meal. In commenting on their entertainment in Raasay Boswell observes: "There was, among a profusion of other things, what I cannot help disliking at breakfast—cheese. It is the custom all over the Highlands to have it." That they considered it a delicacy is shown by the fact that the food commonly offered to the wayfarer was bread, cheese, and milk. The testimony of many notable travellers who then visited Skye witnesses that a competent portion of the good things of this life was purveyed in the houses of the higher ranks of society. "He that shall complain of his fare in the Hebrides," says Dr. Johnson, "has improved his delicacy more than his manhood"; and, elsewhere, he remarks: "If his good fortune brings the traveller to the residence of a gentleman in Skye, he will be glad of a storm to prolong his stay"; while he was so impressed by the hospitality he had received, and the good cheer he had enjoyed, in the house of the Laird of Raasay, that he observed one day to Boswell: "I know not how we shall get away."

Until the beginning of the following century the drinking of tea had not become a fixed habit in Skye; though, in the houses of the tacksmen, the delicate Lilliputian china was produced on occasion; and tea was drunk more for the purposes of ostentation than for its need as a stimulant. A considerable quantity of brandy and whisky was consumed; and the latter, imported from Ferintosh, was sold by the bottle in many a shebeen.

So far as the drinking of intoxicants, however, was concerned, the people were then more temperate by far than they had been in the early part of the century. Johnson observes: "The people of Skye are not a drunken race; at least, I never was present at much intemperance"; while his fellow traveller, speaking of an entertainment in Raasay, says: "We had a company of thirty at supper, and all was good humour and gaiety without intemperance." Yet the punchbowl was much in favour, as it remained for many years after this time in Skye; and we have only to point to the condition of our last authority, on the night of his return to Corrichatachain, to indicate the extent to which the men of that age indulged this symposial habit.

Manners of the People.

From what has already been said, it will be concluded that the virtue of hospitality, which had characterised our people throughout the ages, had not suffered a decline. Travellers who visited Skye during the period under review give unstinted praise to this feature of our race. One of these, John Stanhope, with apparent enthusiasm, makes the suggestion that "a statue of hospitality should be placed upon this shore, holding out her hands to welcome strangers as they arrive. Here we seemed suddenly to have become the near relatives, or intimate friends, of every individual we saw; while I almost began to fancy we must have recently succeeded to the whole island, and were come to take possession." And Pennant declares: "They were hospitable to a high degree, and full of generosity"; and no opportunity fails him to express his sense of gratitude at the kindness shown him wherever he went in Skye.

Dr. Johnson was similarly impressed by the warmth of his reception. Of Raasay House he writes: "Such a seat of hospitality amid the winds and the waters fills the imagination with a delightful contrariety of images. Without is the rough ocean and the rocky land, the beating billows and the howling storm. Within is plenty and elegance, beauty and gaiety. In Raasay, if I could have found a Ulysses, I had fancied a Phaeacia."

The disinterested manner in which the people helped those in distress was another pleasing trait that struck the imagination of the stranger. "They have in themselves," says Pennant, "a natural politeness and address that flows from the meanest when least expected"; and Dr. Johnson says of the people of Raasay: "More gentleness of manners, or a more pleasing appearance of domestic society, is not found in the most polished countries." Elsewhere he observes, in speaking of the people of Skye: "Their conversation is decent and inoffensive. I never heard a health offered by a Highlander that might not have circulated with propriety within the precincts of the king's palace." This is the testimony of one who was not disposed to flattery.

LAW AND ORDER.

Among the numerous changes that followed the rebellion of 1745, there came the abolition of the prerogative of the chiefs to administer justice. Though they had exercised that authority for several centuries, there is nothing on record to show, so far as Skye is concerned, that the chiefs had not carried out their obligations with wisdom and impartiality. But the government had decided that their power was now to be curtailed; and one way of weakening it, they thought, was to deprive them of the right of heritable jurisdiction. The place of these legal amateurs was henceforth to be taken by duly qualified administrators, who were to be responsible for the dispensation of justice in the particular district allocated to them.

The island of Skye had been officially administered from Inverness for many years; now a sheriff-substitute was installed in the island, armed with powers to settle disputes about property and to punish those guilty of petty crimes. One of the first to officiate in that capacity in Skye was Sheriff Alexander MacLeod of Ullinish, whose name is so well known as one of the hosts of Dr. Johnson and of Boswell during their tour in the Hebrides.

The duties that fell to such an officer in Skye were then by no means arduous, for, according to the records of the time, cases of dishonest dealing were very infrequent. Writing in 1793, the Rev. Donald Martin of Kilmuir declares that "crimes are rarely committed." He relates a pathetic incident that happened twenty-five years previously, in which a man had been caught in the act of stealing a sheep. The thief offered a reward to those who detected him if they would keep the matter secret; but, on their declining to give such a promise, "the wretch was found next morning hung to the roof of his own house." One of the few instances of crime at that time is recorded by the Rev. William Bethune, minister of Duirinish. He states that the people of his parish were "peaceable and gentle," but that, in the year 1785, two families had been banished thence "for the crime of cow-stealing."

Quarrels between individuals were, of course, frequent enough then, as they have been since. Long-standing family feuds were renewed at markets, marriages, and burials, where drink was consumed; but such incidents seldom, or never, went so far as to place the participants within the ambit of the law. It is a notorious fact that people would then suffer much before they would deign to avail themselves of the official form of justice for the redress of wrongs. Was it not a Skyeman who, on hearing that the long arm of the law then stretched as far as Ross-shire, exclaimed: "It behoves Christians to be wary; for if the Lord Himself does not check it, it will soon touch us here"?

Until "The '45," all who could afford it went about armed; and they carried their weapons even to church. When the prohibition was introduced, they found it most difficult to conform to a regulation that forbade the arbitrament of the sword for the adjustment of any and every grievance. Johnson adverts to the case of the tenant of Scalpay at this time, who refused to pay the increased rent imposed on him by his landlord; and when Sir Alexander talked of forcing payment, or evicting him from the island, the tacksman "declared his resolution to keep his ground, and to drive all intruders from the island; and he continued to feed his cattle as on his own land, until it became necessary for the sheriff to dislodge him by violence."

Farming.

We have already seen that the boom in the sale of black cattle had led to a considerable appreciation in the price of land. Taking advantage of this state of affairs, the chiefs, or, rather, their chamberlains gave the land to the highest bidder. That provided his opportunity to the man of wealth, with the result that multiple-farming became an established fact in Skye.

As it happened, however, that the occupiers of land had no security of tenure, nothing was done to develop the land, or to conserve its resources. No attempt was made to erect enclosures, to construct drains, or even to apply manure to the soil; for the danger was always present that such improvements would enhance the value of the holding, and induce the landlord either to demand a higher rent, or to place the land once more on the market.

Through the activities of Lord Advocate Grant a law was passed about the year 1753, which proved to have far-reaching consequences. By it the principle of lease-holding was established; and among the numerous benefits that flowed from this enactment was the practice of enclosing lands; and a real endeavour was made to improve the quality of the soil. It was no unusual custom in Skye, before this time, to work the same land for several years without contributing anything to its renewal, with the result that the cultivated patches rapidly deteriorated until they were rendered sterile. Adverting to this wasteful system, the Rev. Malcolm MacLeod of Snizort declares that the gradual impoverishment of the soil had proceeded so far that it would yield no produce unless it were "laid over with a thick coat of manure."

The more progressive farmers took immediate advantage of their new security to begin the work of enclosing the arable land; and contemporary writers have left on record the beneficial results of their enterprise. Towards the end of the century the larger farms of Skye were almost all enclosed. In Kilmuir this work had been completed; and, according to the Rev. Donald Martin, who wrote in 1793, "it had advantages of which all were sensible." On the other hand, the Rev. Martin MacPherson, minister of Sleat, states that many farms in that parish were still open, "and the land suffers much from poor drainage."

It should be added that the advantages of this statute did not extend to smaller occupiers of land; and that these "tenants at will" were removed on the most flimsy pretext, and often without any reason being given at all, if another person were found who was prepared to give a higher rent for the holding.

During the time that the cultivated land was left unprotected, the labour of saving the growing crop from roving animals was a very exacting one. It was especially difficult at night, when the men of the township watched, two by two, throughout the seasons of growth; and they were obliged to tender compensation for any damage that might accrue owing to their negligence.

Such portions of the pasture-land as lent themselves to enclosing with ease, *e.g.*, peninsulas and tongues of land between the forks of rivers, were walled off for the purpose of folding cattle by night. The designation of these spaces was determined by the kind of animals that were kept in them. There was the "buala" for the cattle, "crò" for the sheep, "mannir" for the goats, and the "marclan" for the horses.

Certain parts of the pasture-land were then marked off for special purposes. Of such was the "fàsach," an uncultivated district, whose site and soil made it a suitable place for grazing during the winter and spring. The duty of watching these "winter-parks" usually devolved on the "àireach," or cattleman, of the farm, who remained in the hills for most of the year. As some of his perquisites he was provided with a house, grazing for two or three cows, a few sheep, and, if arable land were available, he was supplied with seed. When the crop was secured, he was allowed to retain half of it, the other portion going to his master. If there were milch cows in the herd, he was obliged to give his employer two stones of butter and four of cheese for each one under his charge. These men led a very lonely life, consigned, as most of them were, to remote regions for the greater part of the year. The lot of MacGillichallum's cattleman on the island of Rona, where he was the only human occupant, must have been a trying one in the extreme.

An analogous calling, and one that was in certain cases synonymous with that of "àireach," was the work of the "buachaille fàsaich." The latter was usually employed by a township for the purpose of ranging the "fàsachs" and keeping them clear of horses, sheep, and the younger cattle. He was also expected to fend marauding animals from off the arable land in the day-time during the seasons of growth.

Shortly after the seed was sown, and before the braid had appeared above ground, sheep, goats, and horses, together with the young and the farrow cattle, were driven to the hills. The day of clearing the arable lands was observed with much ceremony.

Men, women, and children were out in force, and all took part in the "drive." On the way songs were sung, often of an invocatory nature; and many a wish was expressed when they arrived at the summer pasture. They then partook of bread and cheese from last year's making ("féisd na h-imrich"), and the elders of the township asked a blessing on the stock, hoping for:

> "Laoigh bhalgfhionn bhoirionn air gach fireach,
> Piseach crodh na h-àirigh."

About the middle of June a new movement of animals took place, when the milch cows and their calves were driven to the shieling-land. The most fertile spots among the hills were chosen as grazing ground; whereon rude huts were constructed, both for the housing of the calves and for the accommodation of the young women, who then tended the cattle. The period of their sojourn on the "àirigh" (shieling) varied from six to eight weeks, and, during that time, a considerable quantity of butter and cheese was made, while the ordinary pasture-ground of the cattle was given an opportunity to recuperate. The time spent on the shieling ground was a picturesque episode in the life of the people; and it seemed to touch the deepest springs of sentiment in their being. Hence it happens that some of the sweetest lyrics in our language have the life of the shieling for their theme.

SOUMING.

The amount of stock each member of the community was entitled to put to pasture was clearly defined and stringently regulated. A wide choice was given as to what animals were to be grazed, and the equating of the various classes for this purpose ("coilpeachadh") was as follows: One horse = 2 cows = 16 calves = 16 sheep = 16 goats = 32 hoggs = 32 lambs = 32 geese. Any member whose stock exceeded the stipulated number was obliged to make contribution to the common lot, and this was divided equitably among those whose portion fell short of the authorised souming.

A statement of the stock raised on the island at that time is reserved until we come to deal with the general fauna of the island; but here it may be added that, on the larger farms, the average number of cattle reared was, according to an accredited authority, 50 cows, 20 heifers fit for bull, 30 three-year-old heifers, 35 of two years, and 40 yearlings. Of these, about 20 head were sold annually, at a price of about £2 5/- each. Pennant states that the rent of such a farm was £16 at the time of the last Jacobite rebellion, but that in his own day it had risen to £50.

The time for the laying out of farms entirely for sheep-pasturing had not yet arrived, so that, at this time, the number of sheep on the island was only about two-thirds of the stock of cattle.

TILLAGE.

The runrig system of land tenure still prevailed in every township. The apportioned patches were assigned by lot, and a fresh allocation was made every three years. When the land was being divided, care was always taken to set aside a portion for the landless; and such allotments were known as "cionagan nam bochd," or the plots of the poor.

Owing to the neglect of drainage, cultivation was generally carried out in long narrow strips running parallel with the slope of the land. These "beds" were about two yards in width, and they were divided from each other by a trough about a foot deep and two feet wide. They were termed "feannagan taomaidh," a species of multiple lazy-bed; and such a disposition of the soil ensured a dry bed for the growing crop. Potatoes were invariably grown in this manner; but such precautions were not always taken in the cultivation of their other crops. These consisted of small oats, barley, rye, and flax. The district of Kilmuir was then the granary of Skye, raising in favourable seasons "excellent crops of oats and barley," the surplus of which was sold in the neighbouring parishes.

It should be noted that the turnip had been introduced just at the end of this century; according to Stanhope, who toured Skye in 1805, the "crop promised well." The same writer adds that he saw "one field of wheat" that was being grown in the island of Scalpay. During the latter years of the century vast quantities of potato were reared, and this formed the principal article of food for half the year. In one parish as much as 5000 barrels of potatoes were raised in one season, while the yield of oats in the same district amounted to 1600 bolls. Pennant declares that, for the whole island, the quantity of corn produced "in tolerable seasons" was estimated to be 9000 bolls.

The produce was, however, very precarious, for, as Rev. Malcolm MacLeod of Snizort declared in 1793, "the crops of corn and potatoes are ample when the seasons are favourable; but, otherwise, as is oftenest the case, there is great demand for imported meal." Indeed, the ministers of the island deplored, with one voice, the change in conditions that necessitated the importation of such large quantities of foreign food.

Attempts at haymaking were made at that time. But they were seldom successful. "Their hay, which is got at the same time as their corn, at the end of September, is thoroughly bad," is the observation of Stanhope; while Dr. Johnson says "it is often a collection of withered stalks, without taste or fragrance; it must be eaten by cattle that have nothing else; and by most English farmers it would be thrown away."

The principal implement used in tilling the ground was still the crooked spade, though a cumbersome form of wooden plough was also pressed into service. Of the latter, there were twelve in Sleat in the year 1793, and fifteen in the parish of Strath; and these numbers are approximately representative for the other parishes as well. This method of husbandry was a very tedious one. The plough was drawn generally by four horses, yoked abreast, and four men were required to attend to each team. There was the man who guided the implement, the driver who led the horses, and did so walking backwards, and two other men who were busily engaged in laying the upturned ground and dressing it before it could be in a fit state to receive the seed. The results that followed this manner of tillage were usually inferior to those yielded by the operation of the spade, so that we need not wonder at the prejudice that long existed in Skye, as elsewhere, against the use of the plough. An improvement was, however, effected in this implement when Small's swing plough was invented; and it is noteworthy that the first specimen of that type to come to Skye was introduced by MacDonald of Lyndale in the year 1791.

The harrowing of the ground was done chiefly by the women; though the horse was sometimes used, the harrow, according to Pennant, being tied to the animal's tail.

In cutting the ripened grain the sickle was used for the oats, and its strokes were timed to the measure of the reaping song. The barley was secured by being pulled up by the roots. The woman was still the uncomplaining slave of her lord and master, her husband; and what drudgery was to be attended to she had to undertake. She reaped the corn while the men bound it in sheaves. The husband filled creels of farmyard manure, or of seaware, on a convenient boulder, and she carried them away and spread the material on the fields with an appropriate song on her lips. She was resigned to that manner of life; for she would rather work her fingers to the bone than see a man degraded to such base toil. "Haughtily indolent," says Mrs. Grant of Laggan, in speaking of Highlanders, "they thought no rural employment compatible with their dignity, except perhaps the plough." Any other work "spoiled the man," their women believed; and it must be admitted that a sneaking regard for that primitive tenet is even still existent in some parts of Skye.

CUSTOMS: MARRIAGE.

The two betrothals were still observed—"an reiteach beag," when the parties became engaged, and "an reiteach mór," when a final settlement was made as to the amount of dowry to be given, and other particulars. The tocher usually consisted of so many cows, the number varying from two to twenty, or even more, according to the substance of the donor.

The ceremony of betrothal was usually attended with much hilarity; and not a little bickering was often indulged in as the parents or the guardians of the contracting parties haggled over the amount of the marriage portion. These cavillings often developed into bitter recriminations, when old sores were re-opened, and fierce fights in consequence ensued.

On the morning of the wedding-day people gathered from wide areas, and the custom still prevailed whereby the guests were expected to bring their own provisions. The friends of the bride met in her home, those of the groom in his, and they were entertained separately. After the wedding the parties joined. The duration of the festivity depended on the amount of the commissariat, such functions being carried on sometimes for as long as three days.

On the first morning after the marriage, the bride's mother, or, failing her, the groom's, entered the bed-chamber and bound the bride's hair in the "breid beannach," the pointed linen coif, before she left her bed. When the bride arose, she was dressed by the young ladies present; and on the completion of her toilet a procession was formed, and her attendants marched out of the chamber, led by the bride herself. The first man to accost her on leaving the room was obliged to address her in verse, the greeting being termed, "Beannachadh Bàird," or the "Poet's Blessing." This custom was honoured with strict insistence, and few would care to shun the obligation. It is related by the "Clans' Historian," Alexander Mackenzie, that on the occasion of the marriage of the Rev. Donald MacLeod of Duirinish, who afterwards become the third laird of Greshornish, poetic inspiration so failed the guests that none was prepared to offer the bride the customary salutation. As none would venture, and the young bride's arrival was due, the duty of performing the time-honoured ceremony devolved on the bridegroom himself; and his composition, though somewhat lengthy, is worthy of being quoted, owing to the beauty of its sentiment and its lofty moral tone:

" Mìle fàilte dhuit led' bhréid;
Fad' do ré gu'n robh thu slàn.
Móran làithean dhuit le sìth,
Led' mhaitheas, is le d' nì bhi fàs.

" A' chulaidh cheutach a chaidh suas
'S tric a tharruing buaidh air mnaoi;
Bi-sa subhailceach, ceutach,
A thionnsgain thu féin 's an strì.

" An tùs do còmhraidh is tu òg,
An tùs gach lò iarr Dia nan Dùl;
'S chan eagal nach dean thu gu ceart
Gach dearbh bheachd a bhios 'nad rùn.

" Bi-sa fìalaidh, ach bi glic,
Bi mosneachail, ach bi stòld.
Na bi bruidhneach, 's na bi bàlbh,
Na bi mear, no marbh, 's tu òg.

" Bi gleidhteach air do dheagh rùn;
Ach na bi dùinnte, 's na bi fuar.
Na labhair air neach gu h-olc,
'S ged labhrar ort, na taisbein fuath.

" Na bi gearanach fo chrois;
Falbh socrach le cupan làn.
Chaoidh do'n oc na tabhair spéis,
'S le do bhréid ort—mìle fàilt."

BURIALS.

Funeral ceremonies also were attended with much feasting and consumption of strong drink. The eve of the interment was often made the occasion of riotous merrymaking; and, strange as it may appear, those attending the "wake" indulged in such unseemly practices as dancing, which they kept up till the morning.

As the body was being carried to the churchyard, the halting-places on the way were marked by those cairns that in the past were such common features along the beaten tracks. A concourse of women still followed the cortege, chanting the melting strains of the coronach—a poignant spectacle as the sad procession slowly wended its way across the moorlands to the "everhouse" of the dead.

It was considered dishonourable to the deceased if the supply of food and drink were in any way stinted; and so great was the quantity of liquor and eatables consumed during the obsequies that the nearest relatives were often reduced to such poverty that they were not able to recover from it for several years. Immediately the interment was over, the mourners were formed into rows around the grave, and the drinking was resumed, "so that," as the Rev. A. Clark of Duirinish observes in 1841, in speaking of the customs of the previous century, "the people forgot the sacredness of the place and the solemnity of the occasion, and were soon engaged in renewing old feuds and fighting fiercely amid the graves of their ancestors."

DOMESTIC CUSTOMS.

The ceilidh was then one of the principal institutions in the island; and he who could best relate the heroic tale, or recite the ancient barderie, was the person most respected among those who frequented the meeting. People were then very fond of dancing, and the singing of the traditional song was an art in which all would wish to excel. Despite their trials they were a happy race; and their songs helped to lighten their hard lot. Every form of labour was accompanied by its appropriate strain. Thus, "iorrams," or rowing songs, were common; and Pennant tells us that, when he was being taken to view Stac an Fhùcadair, the boatmen sang "songs that are solemn and slow, and have a religious turn consonant to that people." Likewise, as Dr. Johnson was crossing from Skye, mention is made of the "iorram" as being sung by the oarsmen on the way to Raasay. The same authority adverts to the pleasure it gave him, when he landed on the latter island, to hear the melodious voices of the reapers as they cut and bound the grain in a field by the shore.

For the operation of spreading the manure on the fields they had special songs, whose measures closely suited the action. They also had their quern songs, their churning songs, their milking songs, the numbers of which were respectively as numerous as those more persistent ones associated with the fulling of the cloth. That operation is not even yet wholly extinct in Skye; and in its modern form it consists of rubbing the cloth, that has been treated with ammoniated liquid, by a party of young maidens. The number varies from six to twelve, or, on rare occasions, even more; and they move the cloth rhythmically forward and sideways, so that, by the latter movement, the whole piece is made to go interminably round a long platform close to which the women sit, an equal number on each side. For several generations now the work has been done solely by the hands; but during the period under review the feet were sometimes brought into action to relieve the hands temporarily of the labour. In a print in Pennant's "Tour," depicting the work of pulling, we see a band of women, sitting along two sides of a table, on which they are engaged in fulling the cloth by their bare feet; and it deserves notice that the surface, on which the cloth is laid, is prominently corrugated after the manner of a washing-board, in order, presumably, to accelerate the operation of thickening the web. The maidens vied with one another in the singing, and also in the extemporising of the walking songs. Their labour over, after they had washed and dined, and the barn in which they had worked was cleared, they danced into the morning to the thrilling strains of the bagpipes.

THE BAGPIPES.

That instrument was still in constant practice. On account, however, of the measures adopted after "The '45," its influence was now appreciably on the wane. "I have had my dinner exhilarated by the bagpipe at Armadale and at Dunvegan," says Dr. Johnson; and he elsewhere observes: "The college of pipers under the direction of MacCrimmons is not quite extinct.'' There can be no doubt, however, that the playing of this instrument was even then showing signs of falling into desuetude; and, as we have already seen, the long and illustrious succession of MacCrimmon pipers terminated in the year 1776, when their freehold was taken over by the chief. The MacArthurs, too, had fallen on evil days, and the last of the line, by name Angus, died in London about the beginning of the nineteenth century. In Raasay, however, the Mackays still continued in their office of pipers to Clann 'ic 'ille Chalum, and their prestige was maintained at a high level.

The Fixing of Boundaries.

Before the days of dykes and fences a very curious and cruel custom was observed at this time in our island. When the work of delimiting the marches between the owners of neighbouring properties was in dispute, several representatives from both farms were gathered together, and heaps of stones were raised at intervals to mark the boundaries, in accordance with the decision of two men who acted as umpires for the interested parties. When the exact position of the boundary had been fixed, two young lads were severely scourged with thongs, so that they should not forget the scene of the agreement! Pennant says that, when he travelled in Skye in 1770, ''the last thus used is now a pensioner of Sir Alexander MacDonald.''

A pleasing custom, betokening friendship between the chiefs, is recounted by Dr. Johnson. The contracting parties to this observance were the Houses of Raasay and of Sleat; and it consisted in the bequeathing of the sword of the deceased chief of one clan to the keeping of the living chief of the other; and the practice had been honoured for about two hundred years. He further avers that the sword of Sir James MacDonald, who died in 1766, was thus conferred on John MacLeod, who was Chief of Raasay when Dr. Johnson visited the island.

Graddaning.

This ruinous method of making meal prevailed in Skye until the very end of the nineteenth century. Several of the writers of the ''Old Statistical Account'' for the island declare it was practised in their parishes even as late as 1793; and the Rev.

Archd. Clark, who in 1841 wrote the "New Statistical Account" for the parish of Duirinish, says "it is not more than thirty years since graddaning was departed from." Most people deplored the continuance of the wasteful habit, and, apropos it, Dr. Johnson comments: "With the genuine improvidence of savages, they destroy the fodder for the want of which their cattle perish." In corroboration of this observation, the Rev. A. Clark, whose allusion to the practice has already been quoted, states: "I have it on undoubted authority that a tacksman, who died a few years ago, a man of wealth and information, who used to quote the 'Georgics' and passages from 'Horace' over his wine, allowed, just thirty years ago, ten milch cows to die of starvation while he had six stacks of corn reserved in the barnyard for "min ghradain."

SUPERSTITIONS.

The time for commencing any new undertaking was still determined by the phases of the moon. The seed they sow in the moon's increase; the reaping of the grain is begun only when it is in its wane. This superstition has been persistent down the years, and it cannot be said to have died even yet.

Reference has been made to the "gruagach" cult in preceding sections; and it is a noteworthy fact that the superstition prevailed in Skye until the end of the nineteenth century. The Rev. Alex. MacGregor, writing in the "Statistical Account for the Parish of Kilmuir," says that, even as late as the year 1770, dairymaids observed the rite of pouring libations of milk into the hollow of the "gruagach" stone on the island of Troday on Sundays, in the hope that that genius would watch over their cattle, and ensure the milk supply from being filched away during the ensuing week.

Their system of therapeutics, in connection with the disease of animals, is highly interesting, and, although it also has already been touched upon in earlier chapters, a few instances are given here to show the survival of strange beliefs among our people. Flint arrow-heads were carefully preserved, because of their alleged efficacy as a means of curing various diseases. They were believed to be bolts shot by fairies at the cattle; and, acting on the principle of curing "by the hair of the dog that bit him," the animal was made to drink water in which these ancient weapons had been steeped, if its trouble was internal; while, if the injury was external, the affected part was rubbed by the arrow-head. Belemnites and ammonites, too, were used from their supposed curative properties; while the head of a snake was held to be a specific antidote against adder-stings. The last was placed in contact with the wound, and it was supposed to abate the swelling and absorb the virus. So strong was the belief in this manner of treatment that we find, as late as the end of the eighteenth century, a parish minister, a scholar, and a man of affairs, placing full credence in its virtue. It was still in use even towards the end of the succeeding century; and the writer was an eye-witness of its application to a young heifer, supposed to be suffering from snake-bite. After the traditional remedy had been applied for some time the swelling ultimately subsided, and the animal made a complete recovery. *Post hoc, et proper hoc!*

People still made periodic pilgrimages to the ancient chapel on Fladda Chuain, which contained a round bluish stone that was held in deep veneration. Three times they walked round it sunwise, to procure a favourable wind, or a good catch of herring; and a drop or two of the water that exuded from it was supposed to cure all ills.

A form of divination, known as "Taghairm," was then practised on rare occasions in Skye. Its purpose was to determine the course of future events, and even to shape them to the advantage of the diviners through the mediation of demons. Two persons, at least, were essential as participants in this repellent ceremony, the scene of which was usually a secluded cave in the rocks by the shore. According to Pennant, the rendezvous of the last rite of this kind took place in the cave behind the waterfall at Berreraig, in Scorrybreck. There a fire was lit; and, while one of the actors was busily engaged in roasting cats alive, one after another, until, by their screaming, he should succeed in attracting a contingent of demons, the other, attired in a cow's hide, was obliged to try to coerce the evil spirits to propitiate the future for the partners in this nefarious act.

THE CHURCH.

During the latter half of the eighteenth century, the Presbyterian form of worship had succeeded in consolidating its position firmly in Skye. It is true that in those parishes, as, for example, in Strath, where the Jacobite cause was strong, several of the leading families still adhered to Episcopacy; but, from about 1775, the Scottish Church began to make progress even there. Before the end of the century there remained but a few adherents of the English Church. Thus, in the whole of the parish of Bracadale, there were only two families of Episcopalians in the year 1791. There was about the same number then in the parish of Duirinish; while in Kilmuir, with the exception of two or three who belonged to the Roman Catholic Church, all were Presbyterians. In the parishes of Snizort and Portree all the people were of the latter persuasion, and a similar situation obtained in Sleat.

The clergy of Skye at this time were men who were imbued with a genuine zeal for their lofty calling. Endowed with native ability of a very high order, their earnest desire for learning, and their ripe scholarship, excited at once the wonder and the admiration of all strangers who happened to sojourn in their midst. Such an astute observer and keen student of humanity as Dr. Johnson, ardent Episcopalian though he was, says of the ministers of Skye: "I saw no pastor there whom I had reason to think either deficient in learning or irregular in life; but I found several with whom I could not converse without wishing, as my respect, that they had not been Presbyterians."

Pre-eminent among these estimable men was Rev. Donald MacQueen, minister of the parish of Kilmuir, where he succeeded the Rev. Kenneth Bethune about the year 1740. This man of high character and wide learning, is reputed to have been one of the most cultured divines of his day. He was a stout protagonist of those who championed the authenticity of MacPherson's "Ossian"; and, among his other works, he wrote "A Dissertation on the Government of the People of the Western Isles." For the long period of forty-five years he ministered to the spiritual and moral needs of his parish, and he was untiring in his efforts to uproot the prevailing superstitions. He will always be remembered as the constant associate of Dr. Johnson, when that great writer visited Skye. He died in Raasay in the year 1785, when he was succeeded by the saintly Donald Martin. The latter was of the family of Marishader, and was educated at Aberdeen, of whose university he was a graduate in Arts. The Rev. Mr. Martin served this parish for about twenty-two years; and he left Syke for

Inverness in the first decade of the following century. His stipend was £80 a year. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, the old church of Kilmuir, built about 1600, was in a dilapidated condition; and in 1810 a new church, the present one, was built on an exposed position near the shore of Score Bay.

The Rev. Donald MacQueen of Kilmuir had a brother, William, who was minister of Snizort. The latter was the fourth generation of the same family to serve this parish, where he became assistant to his father, the Rev. Archd. MacQueen, in the year 1747. He was ordained minister of the parish in 1754, the year before his father's death. Like his brother, Donald, he was a man of deep culture and outstanding gifts of oratory—qualities that, combined with a rich vein of humour, earned for him the high regard of his parishioners. He died in 1787, in the 69th year of his age; and he was succeeded by the Rev. Malcolm MacLeod in 1788. "Maighster Calum" was a son of MacGillechalum "Camachasach" (the MacLeod of Raasay of "The '45") by an irregular marriage with a vassal's daughter, Janet MacLeod, better known as Bantighearna Dhubh Osgaig. He was a graduate of Aberdeen; and he is described in a contemporary record as "in breeding and in manners, as well as in descent, a gentleman of the old school."

The church of Snizort was in such a ruinous state in 1793 that it was no longer used as a place of worship, and the minister was without a church or manse. When he married Mary, daughter of Donald MacLeod of Suardal, the hereditary armourer to the Chief of Dunvegan, he was constrained to rent a farm in order to provide a dwelling-house for his family. The ruins of his house in Glen Haultin may still be seen.

In fact, only two of the ministers of Skye at that time were supplied with manses; and they were Rev. Donald Martin of Kilmuir and Rev. Roderick MacLeod of Bracadale. The manse of the latter was built in 1789; that of the former in 1778, and it was the first of its kind on the island.

About the middle of the century, the Rev. William MacLeod was ordained minister of Bracadale. He was the brother of Sheriff Alexander MacLeod of Ullinish; and he had been translated hither from Barra. He left Skye in 1765, when he was called to Campbeltown. His successor was Rev. Roderick MacLeod, who came from Harris. The Rev. Roderick was a man of wide learning, a fact that was recognised by his university, which conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Divinity. He is described as "eminently zealous in the work of his Master"; and did one know of him, but his contribution to the "Statistical Account" for his parish, one would gather that he was a man imbued with lofty principles. On alternate Sundays he preached in Eynort, where a large community then resided. The old church, built on the ruins of the chapel there, was "in a very ruinous state" in 1791. The Rev. Dr Roderick continued as minister of the parish until his death in 1812.

In 1752 died the Rev. John MacLeod, minister of Duirinish, a new incumbent being appointed two years afterwards, in the person of Rev. Donald MacLeod, M.A., who had been translated from North Uist. This was a man of lofty ideals and outstanding ability; for it was said of him, shortly after his death, that "he adorned his profession, not so much by his literary merit, of which he possessed a considerable share, as by the constant practice of the most useful and exalted virtues. To do good was the ruling passion of his heart, and in composing differences and diffusing the spirit of peace and friendship." He was a poet of outstanding power, though little has been preserved of his works beyond one piece, "Beannachadh Bàird," to which allusion has already been made. This good Christian was succeeded, in 1762, by Rev. James Nicolson, M.A., who, after serving the parish for four years, went to Sutherland. In 1767 the Rev. William Bethune, of the famous family of physicians and divines, was appointed to the parish. He was a son of Rev. Kenneth Bethune, minister of Kilmuir, and the grandson of the Rev. John Bethune of Bracadale. The Rev. William was a man of scholarly parts and sterling character. As we have seen-already, he formed one of the party that entertained Dr. Johnson and his companion during their memorable tour in 1772. It was he who compiled the "Old Statistical Account" for his parish, which he continued to serve until his retirement in 1810. He died in 1814 in his 76th year.

In a previous section we have seen that the first minister of the newly-constituted parish of Portree was Rev. Hugh MacDonald, who died in 1756. In that year he was succeeded by the Rev. John Nicolson, who was of the famous tacksmen of Scorrybreck. For the long period of forty-three years, "Mr. John" continued to render faithful and ungrudging service to his flock, ministering to their spiritual and temporal needs with earnestness and zeal, enduring hazards and discomforts in a manner that shows him to have been a man possessed of a noble sense of duty and very high ideals. "A man of exemplary life," he is described in "Fasti," "sincere, benevolent, of such untainted rectitude, and of such indefatigable perseverance in discharging his pastoral duties, that, being appointed to preach in Raasay every month, and once a quarter in another part of Skye, he did not fail to do so above four times during his long incumbency, till the spring of 1795, when he met with an accident which dislocated his shoulder and confined him to his house."

He was a man of great independence of mind; and anecdotes are still related in Skye by way of illustrating this phase of his character. By him gentle and semple were treated with equal respect; and such a person was bound to give offence to those who expected to be favoured with special deference. Such, for example, was the regard then shown by ministers, especially to the chiefs, that Stanhope says: "The minister prayed for him (the chief) and recommended him to the care of the Almighty, less as a petition, than as though he were admonishing the Deity on no account to neglect a primary duty." It would appear that "Mr. John" paid little attention to this form of entreaty; and, knowing well this characteristic of his minister, Alexander, the first Lord MacDonald, once banteringly pointed out, after a service in Portree, that he had omitted to make special mention of his chief in his prayers. The reminder brought no apologies from this stalwart divine, who, with his customary imperturbability, observed: "You, I have always in my thoughts, as I have other members of my flock; and in my prayers I fail not to include Your Lordship in the great company of sinners."

This minister of powerful personality, and striking appearance, died at the ripe age of ninety-two, in the last year of the century, when he was succeeded by Rev. Alexander Campbell, who had been schoolmaster and catechist in Portree since 1791.

In Strath, the Rev. Donald MacLeod died in 1749, and in the following year he was succeeded by Rev. Donald Nicolson, who, for twenty-nine years, served this parish with earnestness and wisdom. He has been described as a man of uncommon probity and goodness. His successor, who was presented to the charge by George III., was Rev. Donald Mackinnon, a graduate in Arts of the university of Aberdeen. For the phenomenal period of sixty-two years this great and good man, the first of an illustrious line, dedicated his life to the service of his native parish. At the age of ninety years he retired, in the full confidence that the work on which he had laboured so long would be faithfully continued by his second son, the Rev. John Mackinnon, who succeeded him in 1826. The Rev. Donald died in 1831, in his ninety-sixth year.

The scholarly Dr. John MacPherson served the adjacent parish of Sleat until 1764, and in the following year his son, Martin, became the minister. The latter had been educated both at Aberdeen and Edinburgh. Like his father, he, too, was a man of ability, and an earnest student of the classics. Boswell describes him as a man of intelligence and taste; while Dr. Johnson was delighted with the magnificent library in the farmhouse occupied by the minister at Ostig. There the famous travellers were constrained to stay for five days, owing to unfavourable weather conditions; but such was the nature of their entertainment that they suffered never a moment of dulness until they left the island—on a Sunday! The ruins of his house may still be seen near the branch road to Tarksavaig, a short distance from the point where it leaves the main road of Sleat. The lady of the manse was a daughter of Mackinnon of Corrie. For the long period of forty-seven years the Rev. Martin MacPherson served this parish; and in recognition of his work there, and his ripe scholarship, the University of Aberdeen conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Divinity. He died in 1812, at the age of sixty-nine years.

Some quaint usages were still observed by the Church. Human bones were placed on window-sills, or in recesses in the walls of the church. Boswell states that in the church of Clachan, in Raasay, were to be seen "human bones of an uncommon size"; while Rev. Alexander MacGregor tells us that the skull and thigh bones of that man of hapless fame, Uisdean MacGillespic Chléirich, were preserved on view in the church of Kilmuir until the year 1827, "when they were again consigned to the dust." From the comments made by unbiassed observers on this custom, one is forced to the conclusion that it savoured rather of a foolish pride in the strength of their forbears than of a genuine desire to advance those matters that pertained to the glory of God.

That the Church wielded a powerful sway is shown by the disciplinary measures that were then put into practice against such as were guilty of breaches of the Moral Law. Among many other forms of punishment administered to those who fell from grace was the strange one of condemning an adulterer to stand in a barrel of cold water at the door of the church before and throughout the service. The severity of this amusing form of penance was sometimes tempered, when the culprit was allowed, instead, to stand on a seat, in full view of the congregation, dressed only in a wet canvas shirt!

EDUCATION.

In a previous section mention was made of the high degree of culture that prevailed, especially among the upper classes of Skye, in the early part of the eighteenth century. During the remainder of that century the love of learning had suffered no decline; rather had it grown to such an extent that it was no uncommon incident during this period to hear conversations carried on in Latin in the houses of the tacksmen, when it was thought desirable, to keep the matter under discussion a secret from the servants. These accomplishments excited the wonder and the admiration of all such as appreciated learning for its own sake. "I believe," said General Stewart of Garth, "it is rather unique for the gentry of a remote corner to learn Latin, yet so it was in Skye." At Corriechatachain, Dr. Johnson observed to Boswell, "one of the remarkable things of Skye is that there are so many books in it"; but what especially aroused his surprise was that in every house he found books in more languages than one. "Literature," says he, "is not neglected by the higher ranks of the Hebrideans"; while one of our own ministers, the Rev. Donald Martin of Kilmuir, writing about 1790, remarks: "The principal farmers are well educated and well informed."

Nor did they neglect the literature of their own race. The MacDonald chiefs still maintained the office of laureate, on whom they conferred, among other perquisites, lands free of all exactions. Thus, to one, Duncan MacRury, who held the post of family bard, they allotted 5 bolls of meal, 5 stones of cheese, and 25/- in wages for a year, in addition to his freehold. MacRury was succeeded in the laureateship by the renowned poet, John MacCodrum, who was the last to hold this position of privilege under the MacDonalds of Skye.

Such was the encouragement given to the native culture, in face of a bitter opposition that sought, by overt and covert means, to stamp out all that was distinctive of the people of the Highlands. Their language was assailed from all sides. Its use was forbidden as a means of instruction in the schools; and many went so far even as to advocate the proscription of the Gaelic version of the Scriptures in order, as they thought, that no monument would remain of the ancient tongue.

In the year 1750, the Committee for the Management of the Royal Bounty allocated a sum of £25 per annum to an instructor who was to act in the dual capacity of teacher and catechist in the district of Trotarnish. Sir James MacDonald, the scholarly chief, decided to erect a school in Portree; and, according to Rev. Alexander Campbell, who had been schoolmaster there before he became the minister of the parish, "a large and commodious school was built." To it pupils were attracted from all parts of the island; and, when he wrote in 1793, he says "three were ready for college." Those who were there as boarders paid from £3 to £4 10/- a quarter, and to that sum was added a fee of 2/6 for instruction. The number of pupils in attendance varied with the season, being often double in winter what it was in summer. Mr. Campbell, who was the son of a tacksman of Corlarach, near Dunvegan, was appointed schoolmaster in 1791.

In Sleat, the parochial schoolmaster during the major portion of this period was a certain James Beverley, a native of Aberdeen, and he was held in high repute in the district. The school population there varied from twenty-five to forty, and the teacher's salary amounted to £25 a year. It may be mentioned that a spring in that part of Skye is still known as "Tobar Bhebherli," after this famous dominie.

In the parish of Strath the number of children attending school towards the end of the century ranged from thirty in summer to sixty during the winter months, and the wage paid to the schoolmaster there was £22 a year. In Snizort there was no parish school at that time.

The Housing of the People.

The housing of the people was then not much worse than it was even for a century after this time. It is true that there were still some of the turf dwellings, in which the walls were composed of blocks of earth, bound together by wattles, and the roof covered with divots and thatched with heath, fern, or rush. Such erections became grass-grown after a few years, and, at a distance, could not be distinguished from the natural mounds that surrounded them. They were still to be seen in 1774, and they probably continued to be occupied until a later date.

The vast majority of dwelling-houses were, however, built of stone. They consisted really of two parallel walls, with a wide intervening space that was packed either by earth or by a mixture of earth and rubble, to make the walls draught-proof. The back wall was often single, as the house was built into the face of a declivity. The roof was made of couples and rafters covered with divots, thatched after the manner of the turf-huts, and all bound by ropes of heather, with "anchors" of stone attached as weights to their ends; so that the houses looked, as Boswell graphically observes, "like a lady's hair in papers."

Owing to its thickness, a wide extent of the top of the wall was left uncovered, an architectural device calculated to deflect the wind's full force from the somewhat loose and light material of the roof. Such a plan was not, however, without many inconveniences, for this projecting portion acted as a catchment area for the drip from the roof; so that runnels of water often percolated the walls and found their way into the inside of the house. Then, again, it soon came to be so overgrown with grass that animals, such as sheep, goats, and even cattle, were tempted to graze there, because of the easy access from the back. In their perambulation they sometimes glissaded from the narrow ledge and broke their limbs; or, as often happened, when the larger animals endeavoured to turn in such a narrow space they went right through the roof, to the danger of their own lives and those of the inmates of the house.

The houses were lit only by the door and the smoke-hole, the windows, if any existed, being filled with bags of straw or divots of earth, except in fine weather. The doorway was seldom placed in the middle of the wall; but was much nearer one end of the house than the other. It is thus evident that ventilation was very defective; and since, in the vast majority of cases, cattle occupied that portion of the house nearest the door, and were the first to use the ingoing air, the atmosphere breathed by the humans was dangerously vitiated before it reached their quarters.

In most of these houses there were no partitions of any kind. The floor of the portion occupied by the cattle was invariably hollowed to a depth of about two feet below that of the human occupants of the house, in order that the animal litter might there accumulate, ferment, and mature, and thus have its fertilising virtues unimpaired by the rains of winter. Besides, this internal cesspool was the repository for all manner of domestic refuse, which added its noisomeness to that of cattle, horses, and poultry. Through this mushy waste lay the way to the quarters occupied by the people themselves!

This consisted of one long uninterrupted chamber, dim even by day, and darker by night when the cruisie shed its feeble ray and diffused its fishy smell throughout the gloomy hall. The fire was placed on a raised hearth in the middle of the floor; and health was safeguarded by the all-pervading peat-reek, begriming everything, it is true, but, at the same time, effectually sterilising and deodorising the unwholesome atmosphere. As the floor consisted only of the bare earth, it was often softened to a mire in wet weather.

The more pretentious tacksmen lived in cottages, with walls cemented by lime, with glazed windows and boarded floors, but roofed with thatch; for, according to Thomas Pennant, "there was not above two or three slated houses" in the island of Skye in the year 1770.

POPULATION.

During the half-century under review, the population of Skye had increased by leaps and bounds. No official records were, of course, kept in those days; but, on a careful computation of all the available data, it is no exaggeration to say that the increase was almost 30 per cent. during a period of thirty-five years, from 1755 to 1790. In the former year the total population of the island was about 11,200; in the latter it had risen to 14,400.

Appended is the population of the several parishes of Skye in 1755 and 1790, respectively:—

Parish.	*1755*	*1790*	*Percentage of Increase.*
Strath	943	1579	67 per cent.
Sleat	1250	1788	43 per cent.
Portree	1385	1980	43 per cent.
Kilmuir	1572	2065	31 per cent.
Duirinish	2568	3000	17 per cent.
Bracadale	1907	2250	17 per cent.
Snizort	1608	1808	12 per cent.
Total	11,233	14,470	...

These figures are, of course, only rough approximations, and it is evident that there was no uniformity in the methods employed to arrive at an accurate estimate. Thus the Rev. Alexander Campbell states that the population, as given for the parish of Portree in 1790, and estimated "after the exactest inquiry," represented the "total number of souls"; while in the parish of Strath the figures given for the same year are exclusive of children under "nine years of age." All those who were responsible for the compilation of the Statistical Account, already quoted, advert to the remarkable increase in the population. The Rev. William Bethune of Duirinish affirms that the old men in his parish declare that lands, "which lay waste for lack of men to occupy them" within their own recollection, were then densely populated; and it is noteworthy that the increase in the parish of Sleat was so very marked, despite the toll taken of its population by "emigration and repeated drains to the army," according to the Rev. Martin MacPherson. All are unanimous in attributing the cause of the increase in the population to the preservation of life, consequent on the introduction of vaccination, that was universally practised in Skye since about 1760. It would indeed appear that, until then, the ravages of the dread disease of smallpox were enormous; "almost whole families being swept away by it," declares the Rev. Malcolm MacLeod of Snizort, "leaving one or two, or sometimes three, in a house"; and the Rev. Donald Martin of Kilmuir states that, before the practice of inoculation had been adopted, this disease "almost depopulated the district."

STATURE.

There existed then, and for several decades after that time, a preconception, the validity of which will not bear the test of close investigation. That was the notion that the men of former days were much bigger, and therefore stronger, than their descendants. This failing, which mayhap "leaned to virtue's side," and was really a faint survival of ancestor-worship, was so far indulged that when bones of an exceptionally large size were brought to the surface in a graveyard, in the course of a new interment, they were preserved with great care, and exhibited in the windows of the churches. They were pointed to as a monument of the great size and strength of the forebears, although, in referring to bones kept in the church in Raasay, and alleged to have been those of a giant, traditionally called "Faobairneach MacCuithean," the Rev. Alexander Campbell of Portree, writing near the close of the eighteenth century, says "the present generation is in that respect little superior to their neighbours."

We know that travellers, who have left on record their impressions, found no instance of extraordinray stature in Skye. Martin Martin does not say that the people there were in any way taller than others among whom he sojourned. Pennant saw none of outstanding physique; while Dr. Johnson observes: "The inhabitants of Skye are commonly of the middle stature; with fewer among them very tall, or very short, than are seen in England."

Indeed, the Rev. William Bethune of Duirinish, who wrote in 1793, says "the men are of low stature, from 5 ft. 4 ins. to 5 ft. 8 ins., and very few are 6 ft. in height"; while his contemporary, the Rev. A. Campbell, declares that no one in the parish of Portree exceeded 6 ft., although there were "five about that height." The Rev. Mr. Martin of Kilmuir corroborates these observations by his assertion that the height of his parishioners "ranges from 5 ft. 8 ins. to 6 ft.; and the greatest height to which any has attained is 6 ft. 4 ins."

LONGEVITY.

Nor was the span of life longer then than it is at the present time. "I found no instances here" (Skye), Dr. Johnson declares. "of extraordinary longevity"; and his statement is substantiated by a considerable body of evidence supplied by those who compiled the "Old Statistical Account." Thus, in Sleat, there were then thirteen persons over 80 years of age; and, of these, one had reached 98, while another had attained his 95th year. Of Strath it is said "there are a few persons now living whose ages range from 80 to 90 years"; and, concerning Portree, it was thought to be worthy of comment that "two were over 90." The Rev. Malcolm MacLeod of Snizort states that "five or six persons died within the last two years, whose ages ranged from 84 to 90." Of the adjacent parish of Kilmuir it is said "there are some people above 90 years of age, but few reach 100"; and in Duirinish there lived "two men of 95 and 88, and two women of 97 and 93."

Hence we see that, although the average age has undoubtedly been raised down the years, the maximum life for the individual has remained fairly constant. It should be observed that, since the registration of births had not then become an institution in our island, it is possible that some of the figures quoted above are only approximately correct.

CLIMATE.

Despite the pronouncements of the aged, and the *laudatores temporis acti*, who always place the "Golden Age" behind them, the climate of Skye was in the past neither better nor worse than it is at the present time. Indeed, an element of comedy appears when we collate the averments of the ministers of Skye who wrote the "New Statistical Account" of 1841 with those of their brethren who described the conditions prevailing in the same parishes fifty years previously. Thus the former speak of "sensible changes in the seasons" from what obtained in the days of their fathers; while the latter, in effect, declare that the climate of the island had appreciably deteriorated within living memory. And yet several of these writers make reference to periods of necessity brought about by inclement conditions of the weather in the past. The year 1688 was long remembered in Skye for its storms and its rains; and, in adverting to it, towards the end of the following century, the Rev. Mr. Martin of Kilmuir says: "The seasons were so eminently unfavourable, and the corn so deficient in quantity and quality, that the poor actually perished on the highways from want of aliment." Martin Martin, who, as we have already seen, has left on record a most illuminating account of the Western Isles, written at the beginning of the eighteenth century, says: "The climate here (Skye) is uncommonly moist and cold." Thomas Pennant, who toured our island in 1770, observes: "The farmer labours to remedy this distress (want of food); but the wetness of the land late in spring prevents him from putting into the ground the early seed of future crops"; and the same writer states elsewhere: "The difficulties the farmer undergoes in this bad climate are unknown in the south." Such was the severity of the winter of 1771 that, according to MacLeod of MacLeod, afterwards the general, his tenants "lost one-third of their stock"; and so great was the destitution that the government was constrained to send food to the West Highlands, a cargo of meal being sent to Skye, of which the parish of Duirinish alone got 44 bolls. The spring of that year was remembered as the "Black Spring," when the weather was so unseasonable that, as Dr. Johnson tells us, "many of the roebucks perished." The observation made by that great author on our climate is worth quoting. He was in Skye in the autumn of 1773, and he says: "Their weather is not pleasing. Half the year is deluged with rain. From the autumnal to the vernal equinox, a dry day is hardly known, except when the showers are suspended by a tempest. . . . Their winter overtakes their summer, and their harvest lies upon the ground wet with rain."

Owing to adverse weather conditions in 1778, and again in 1782, the crops proved a failure, many being left destitute. At the end of the century there was no marked change for the better. "From the lateness, as well as the uncertainty of the seasons," says the Rev. Malcolm MacLeod of Snizort, "this district, and, indeed, most of the island, seems calculated by nature more for grazing and green pasture than for raising corn." The Rev. William Bethune of Duirinish observes: "The air here is moist and foggy—the west and south-west winds bring floods of rain"; and the same authority informs us that in his parish "the common distempers were rheumatics, sciatica colds, and nervous fevers, due to the wet climate."

THE MAINTENANCE OF PAUPERS.

No efforts were made in those days by the civil authorities for the maintenance of the indigent poor. These were wholly dependent for their sustenance on the community among whom they lived;

and a serious burden they often proved to be. True, that was not much that was required for keeping body and soul together; but there were so many in a state of necessity, and so few were in affluent circumstances, that the little extra conferred on the needy often made for the donors all the difference between sufficiency and want.

In addition to those deficient in means, there were those whose mental powers were so defective as to preclude them from supporting themselves. They, too, lived on the charity of relatives and neighbours; and so refractory was their conduct on many an occasion that they were a sore trial to the forbearance of their hosts. But no matter how intractable in behaviour, or ungrateful in demeanour, these unfortunate individuals might be, it was considered a religious duty to give them a night's harbourage. They went from house to house, seldom remaining more than a single night with any one family; nor were they ever met with a closed door. Many of these half-witted people were endowed with a considerable fund of subtle cunning, that led them to trade on their own avowed weakness, and the native generosity of their neighbours, in order to lead a life of idleness.

The indigent made periodical wanderings; and when they had amassed enough provender they retired to their hovels, to renew their peregrinations when want, or inclination, prompted them. It is evident that, under such conditions, the less assertive were bound to suffer great privations; as the funds raised locally for the relief of destitution were woefully inadequate for their purpose. These monies accrued principally from church collections, eked out by fines imposed on delinquents; but when we recollect that in a district like Skye, where crime was rare, and Sunday collections seldom consisted of more than "a few halfpence," the income from such sources could not be other than meagre. So small, indeed, was it, that the Rev. Donald Martin of Kilmuir states: "The session cannot give above 3/-, or 3/6 at most, per annum a-piece, even to the most distressed, and still less to others." It is true that, in some parts of the Highlands, a few parishes were able to amplify this trifling sum through the munificence of wealthy philanthropists; but such means seldom came the way of the kirk-sessions of Skye, except in the notable instance of the parish of Sleat, where the famous diplomat, Sir John MacPherson, son of the Rev. Dr. John MacPherson of Sleat, and Governor-General of India, made a substantial contribution to the funds of the poor of his native parish.

Well did this great-hearted man deserve the pæan pronounced on him by the wife of Major Alexander MacLeod of Stein, when she says:

"Tha thu iriosal bàidheil
Tha thu measail air càirdean
Gu 'n dh' fhiosraich thu 'n àrdan
Tha feumail."

The aggregate number of paupers in the seven parishes of Skye was between 500 and 600, a not inconsiderable proportion of the total population of the island. Towards the close of the period under review, there were as many as 170 in the parish of Bracadale alone. We need not wonder, therefore, at the agitation that was gaining ground, even in Skye, advocating the institution of Parochial Boards which should be responsible for attending to the welfare of the paupers of their districts.

Military.

When the proscription against the carrying of arms was in force, the military ardour of the Highlanders found an outlet in the Continental wars. Thus many Skyemen enlisted in the Dutch service, in which the Scottish Brigade formed a formidable unit. Men like MacLeod of Talisker, and MacLeod of Balmeanach, held high posts in the army of the Netherlands, the former being raised to the rank of colonel, the latter retiring in 1787 with the rank of major. When these officers were home on furlough, they recruited large numbers of young levies from Skye, chiefly from the parish of Bracadale.

A far-seeing statesman like Pitt was not long in a position of power before he felt the necessity of conciliating the estranged feelings of the Highlanders; and he conceived that the best way to achieve that object was to enlist them in the service of their country. The opportunity soon presented itself on the outbreak of the War of Independence in America, when Pitt was not slow to make use of the splendid qualities of the Highlanders for the rough campaigning that was a feature of that unfortunate event. The Highlanders readily responded to the call. Sir Alexander MacDonald of Sleat raised about 700 men, who were sent to

America as a detachment of "The MacDonald Highlanders." We have already seen that the young Chief of MacLeod had been commissioned with the rank of captain in the new army, and that a large contingent was recruited from his clan.

Among other notable men from Skye who played a part in this war were Captain Allan MacDonald of Kingsborough; the courtly and clever Major Alexander MacLeod of Lochbay; Captain John MacLeod, afterwards of Ollach; his brother, Captain Norman of Camustinivaig, both of the family of Rigg and of Raasay; their uncle, Norman, who was a lieutenant, and another young officer, who afterwards became famous as Lieutenant-General Sir John MacLeod, the first Director-General of Artillery, a post created for him by the Duke of Wellington. As a young officer, William MacAskill, son of a tacksman of Ru'-an-Dùnain, fought in the same war. This fine soldier rose to the rank of major-general, subsequently holding the post of Governor of Mauritius. Contemporary with these was Lieutenant Charles MacDonald of Ord, the father-in-law of the author, Alexander Smith. This officer had seen much service, and he took part in his last fight at Vinegar Hill, in 1798.

It was the prowess of men such as these that inspired the Earl of Chatham to give expression to that memorable eulogy of his on the achievements of the Highlanders: "I sought for merit wherever it could be found. It is my proud boast that I was the first minister who looked for it, and found it in the mountains of the North. I called it forth, and drew it into your service, a hardy and intrepid race of men—men who, when left by your jealousy, became a prey to the artifices of your enemies. These men were brought to combat on your side. They served with fidelity, as they fought with valour, and they conquered for you in every quarter of the globe."

On the completion of their term of service, the vast majority of these soldiers returned to Skye; and not only were they thus the means of bringing a considerable amount of wealth into the island, but they were also bound to have exerted a powerful influence on the manners of the people at that time. "There are among us," says Rev. Donald Martin of Kilmuir, "many officers of the army, who have retired on half-pay, after having bravely served their country—men who possess all those polite and elegant accomplishments by which their profession is distinguished."

FAUNA.

During the latter half of the eighteenth century the black cattle constituted by far the most numerous group of animals on the island. Immense herds of them were reared, huge droves being yearly driven to the Lowland markets. Pennant declared that the number sold from Skye, in a normal year, rarely fell below 4000; while, on a careful computation, based on the available evidence, it is found that, towards the end of the century, the stock considerably exceeded 17,000 head. They were hardy animals; and, in describing them, Pennant states that in Skye was produced "the largest breed of cattle in all the Highlands." The young and the farrow cattle were wintered in the open, the milch cows alone being housed during the colder seasons. According to the writers of that time, the yield of the best cows was about three quarts of milk daily.

Next to the cattle in order of number came the sheep, which were of the breed known as "Caoraich Bheaga." This species was native to the island. They were characterised by their diminutive size, seldom exceeding 30 lbs. in weight, by the fine quality of their wool, and the delicious flavour of their mutton, "which far surpasses that belonging to the best-fed of the larger breeds" of the south. They were varicoloured, being white, black, grey, and brown, or with these colours intermingled. A long tuft of wool adorned the forehead; and they bore supernumerary horns, some of the rams of this breed having as many as six. That they enjoyed complete immunity from those disastrous diseases to which the genus is now subject, is attested, among other evidence, by the fact that we have no Gaelic names for the common ovine disorders. These troubles resulted from the crossing of the "Caoraich Bheaga" with the larger breed of the South, when the great demand for wool supervened about the beginning of the following century.

The small breed of sheep has long since become extinct in Skye; but a few persisted, notably in the parish of Duirinish, even as late as 1843. They were not exported, being reared merely for local consumption, since their mutton was noted for its delicacy. Their wool, which was of fine quality, was made into clothes of all kinds. So tame were they that they submitted to milking, the normal daily yield being one pint per head.

The total stock of sheep was less by one-third than the number of cattle on the island at this time; and although it was higher than this in certain of the parishes, as, for example, in Strath, where the number of sheep even exceeded that of the cattle, yet, in the contiguous parish of Sleat, the number was "so few," according to the Rev. Martin MacPherson, who wrote in 1793, "as to be hardly worth calculating."

In numerical order, the third place was taken by horses, the total number of which was about 3400. These animals were so hardy that they were never put under shelter, even in the most rigorous weather; but this virtue was neutralised by the fact that they were inclined to be restive, and often intractable while at work.

The goat also existed then in large numbers, the rugged configuration of the island, and especially the rocky coastline, offering an ideal habitat to these animals. They abounded on the eastern slopes of Beninivaig, on Scorrybreck, the shore rocks of Duirinish and of Minginish, the hills of Strathaird, and the island of Raasay. Owing to the injury they inflicted on trees, by stripping the bark, the maintenance of the goat was discouraged wherever attempts were made to set up plantations in any part of the island.

Numbers of them, however, tethered near the dwelling-houses, were kept for the sake of the large quantity of milk they yielded. This amounted, on the average, to a quart a day; and it was held to be of a highly nutritious quality.

There were few or no hogs on the island, though Dr. Johnson observes he saw one pig at Dunvegan.

Of creatures in the feral state, there were deer, roe, hares, and several kinds of wild fowl; but, on the island of Raasay, there were no deer, hares, or rabbits, although the hills abounded with feathered game. The fox was then very common, "notwithstanding a handsome premium given for every one killed"; and the writers of that time deplore the havoc it wrought among sheep and lambs. Its depredations were so great that the "brocair," or fox-hunter, was kept busy in every district.

Johnson declares that there were neither rats nor mice in the island of Raasay in his own time, but that weasles were so common that they lived even in the walls of dwelling-houses, where "they could be heard rattling behind chests and beds." The black rat did exist then, however, on the island of Skye.

The birds of prey, now met with on the island, are mentioned also at that time—eagles, hawks, and ravens; while game birds, such as grouse, partridge, blackcock, and ptarmigan, were common. The last lived principally on the Coolins and the neighbouring hills, and flocks sometimes made their home on the great ridge of Trotarnish.

FLORA.

The ancient forests of the island had long since disappeared, only a few scattered coppices of birch, hazel, oak, and alder then remaining. "This isle hath antiently been covered all over with woods," declares Martin Martin, "as appears from the great trunks of fir trees, etc., dug out of the bog." It must be said that the Scotch pine, the only native conifer of Britain, is not widely distributed in the peat-bogs of Skye, the more prevalent logs discovered there being the birch, the hazel, and an occasional oak. In the adjacent island of Rona, however, the pine is present in abundance in the mosses, from which its huge boles still protrude, and large trunks of that tree are brought to the surface. Only a few years ago, a peat-cutter there unearthed a log that was 52 ft. 6 ins. long, and as "straight as the mast of a ship."

Martin states that the most extensive wood in Skye in his own day was "Lettir hurr, and it exceeds not three miles in length."

LITERATURE.

Whereas in other parts of the Highlands this period of history is characterised by a great outburst of song, scarcely a note was sounded in the island of Skye. It is, indeed, a remarkable fact that a land, so famed as the nurture-ground of military fervour, should have received so little inspiration from the stirring times of "The '45." That the romance of the movement had seized the imagination of the people, in no uncertain manner, has already been amply demonstrated; and the wonder therefore grows that its influence has found no expression in their poetry. The dilly-dallying attitude of the chiefs of Skye, in the first stages of the Rebellion, brought bitter disappointment to their clansmen; and when, later, the former joined the Hanoverian cause, the popular ardour glowed fitfully and low. Such conditions could only prove unfavourable to the cultivation of the muses, and the poetic night that then supervened reigned over the island for a long period. It was, however, to be illumined by one star, whose brilliant but brief ray shone towards the end of the century.

This solitary figure was William Ross; and it is noteworthy that, of his compositions that are extant, only three treat of the Jacobite movement, and in none of them do we perceive those traits of genius so apparent in his other works. Only in his "Oran do Mharcuis nan Greumaich," written by him in 1788 on the revocation of the hated "Unclothing Act," do we detect even a suggestion of that intense feeling that pulsates through his other productions; and, his stout Jacobitism notwithstanding, his "Lament" on the death of Prince Charlie, composed in the same year, utterly fails to stir the sympathy of the reader. An earlier poem, written in 1782, on the occasion of the restoration of their estates to certain of the Highland chiefs, has neither depth of feeling nor conviction; for he appears, even then, to have become reconciled to the Hanoverian regime.

Indeed, there can be no doubt that his name would have been long lost to fame had his reputation rested solely on those pieces that have been mentioned. There are, however, other compositions of his that will live as long as the language in which they are written, breathing, as they do, the true spirit of poetry. Nevertheless, it must be conceded that his themes are somewhat circumscribed, being confined chiefly to love, whisky, and quiet pastoral scenes. In that last branch of the art of poetry he stands supreme, and those of his lyrics that treat of that theme communicate a peculiar charm to the mind. He delights in describing nature's quieter moods, and the mazy windings of the shady glens, the gentle slopes where the lone shielings lie—scenes of those pastoral pursuits that poets have idealised, and which seem to us like the last lingering phases of the "Golden Age."

He is at his best in "Oran air Gaol na h-Oighe," composed during his sojourn in Perthshire; as well as in that other exquisite fragment, "Oran a Rinn am Bàrd ann an Dun-eideann," where the most pleasing imagery is blended with sweetest sentiment:

> " O 's tric bha mi falbh leat,
> A gheala-bhean na féile,
> Ann an doire nan geug,
> Is air reidhlean an driùchd;

'S air sraithibh a' ghlinne
Far 'm bu bhinne guth smeòraich,
'S air iomair nan neòineinean
Feòirneanach, chùr'."

His diction is in keeping with his theme—gentle and chaste; while the smooth glide of his metre, strong and free, is suggestive of the deeper waters of the lower hills. Take the following verse, with its arresting alliterative touches, its marvellous metrical interlaceries, like the ancient Celtic sculptural designs, so intricate, yet so seemingly simple:

"'Nuair a bhithinn 's mo mhìn-mhal'
'N gleannan rìomhach na cuaich,
No 'n doire fasgach na smeòraich
Gabhail sòlais air chuairt,
Cha mhalairtinn m' éibhneas,
O bhi 'ga h-eugmhais car uair,
Air son stòras fir stàta
Dh'aindeoin àirdead an uaill."

In his delightful idyll, "Moladh na h-Oighe Ghaidhealaich," we have abundant illustration of the untrammelled movement of his harmonious cadences, and his delightful picture of the healthy joys of shieling life:

"'Nuair thig a' Bhealltuinn,
'S an Samhradh lusanach,
Bidh sinn air àirigh
Air àird nan uchdanan:
Bidh cruit nan gleanntan,
Gu cainntir, cuirteasach,
Gu tric 'gar dùsgadh
Le sùrd gu moch-eirigh."

Nature in her sterner moods has no place in his themes—the wild grandeur of his native land failed to inspire him; and even the pleasures of the chase, in which his contemporary bards delighted to revel, held out no attractions for him. In that poem of doubtful authorship, "Bruthaichean Ghlinn Bhraoin," there are several verses attributed to him that are full of the true huntsman's passion for the sport of the wilds; but, in addition to other matters, the reference in that exquisite song to the author's imprisonment in French hands, when the real struggle with France came after 1790, the year of the poet's death, suggests that some of the verses were added to the original by a soldier who had suffered during the Napoleonic Wars.

It should be observed that Ross occasionally introduces scenes from nature as a foil, in order to set off the graces of the woman he loves. He is pre-eminently the bard of love; for none ever sang of the lady of his heart as William Ross did. The depth of his passion, his ability to express it in language as charming as his theme, and especially the purity of his thoughts, are all features that place him in an unrivalled position among the Gaelic bards. Though he is not wholly blind to "lovely cheeks, or lips, or eyes," there is, for him, far greater beauty in the "gentle thoughts and calm desires" of her who first inspired his lay. Thus, in "Cumha a' Bhàird," which he composed when unrequited love was shattering his delicate health,

". . . . . an aon rùn,
A bhuin mo ghaol gun ghaol da chionn,"

he delights in recording her spiritual as well as her physical attributes:

" Gur gile mo leannan
Na'n eal' air an t-snàmh,
Gur binn' i na smeòrach
Air barraibh ròchruinn 's a' Mhàigh.
Gur h-e geanmnachd a beusann
'S i gun eucoir 'na càil
A lùb mise gu géilleadh
Air bheag éiginn 'na gràdh."

"Love at first sight" never inspired bard to compose a nobler panegyric on the object of his affections than we find in the poem entitled "Feasgar Luain":

" Dhiuchd mar aingeal mu mo choinneamh
'N ainnir òg bu bhinne snuadh;
Seang slios fallain, air bhlàth canaich,
No mar eala air a' chuan.
Sùil ghorm mheallach, fo caoil mhala,
'S caoine sheallas 'g amharc uaith',
Beul tlàth tairis, gun ghné smalain,
Do 'n gnàth carthannachd gun uaill ";

and love's fiery furnace never burned with fiercer flame than it did for this bard when he was constrained to compose "Cuachag nan Craobh":

" Thuit mi le d' ghath, mhill thu mo rath,
Striochd mi le neart dòruinn.
Saighdean do ghaoil, sàbht anns gach taobh,
Thug dhiom gach caoin còmhla.

Mhill thu mo mhais, ghoid thu mo dhreach,
Mheudaich thu gal bròin dhomh
'S mar fuasgail thu tràth, le d' fhuran, 's le d' fhàilt
'S cuideachd am bàs dhòmhsa."

Yet in spite of the depth and the intensity of his passion, how chaste are his thoughts, and what noble feeling pervades his expression; while in that "other song," "Oran Eile," written when he heard of the marriage of Marion Ross, the poignancy of his grief has plunged him helplessly into the depths of dark despair; and if the chief test of poetry be its power to arouse the emotions, then this sweet, sad song of William Ross must take its place among the greatest lyrics in our language:

" 'S fada tha m'aigne fo ghruaim,
Cha mhosgail mo chluain ri ceòl.
Am breislich mar ànrach a' chuain,
Air bharraibh nan stuadh ri ceò.
'S e ionndrainn t'àbhachd bhuam
A chaochail air snuadh mo neòil,
Gun sùgradh, gun mhire, gun uaill,
Gun chaithream, gun bhuaidh, gun treòir."

William Ross has been called the "Burns of Gaelic Song"; and there is much to justify the title. Each stands out pre-eminently, in his own language, as the poet of love; and, of the works of Ross, two pieces are extant in praise of strong drink, that make the parallel the more pronounced. In his treatment of this theme our bard is particularly happy. That rollicking tavern-song of his, "Moladh an Uisge Bheatha," furnishes many a brilliant burst of wit and humour, while underneath the surface a rich vein of satire permeates the whole composition. In extolling the virtues of whisky, Burns, at his best, has said nothing better than the following:

" Chan eil cléireach, no pears' eaglais,
Cràbhach, teallsanach, no sagart,
Do nach toir thu caochladh aigne
Sparradh céill 's an amhlair."

His other work, "Mac na Braiche," falls far below the foregoing in poetic merit, and in it occurs a reference to Dr. Johnson's alleged lapse while he was travelling in the Highlands:

" Dh'fhàg mac-na-braiche e gun lide
Mar amadan liotach dall";

a mis-statement of fact that must appear egregiously strange to all who know of the great Englishman's abstemious habits.

Like Burns, again, Ross has a just conception of the correct use of satire. His is never of the bitter, vindictive kind that descends to the particular and the personal; rather is it the playful banter of the mind that can rise above the common-place conditions of life, and can send its stinging shafts to worry rather than to wound. By this method of treatment he makes the object of his scorn at once a despicable and ridiculous thing. In "An Ladie Dubh," a satire he composed on a censorious priest, who had himself not been over-scrupulous in keeping close to those paths of rectitude which he had so sanctimoniously urged his flock to follow, Ross exhibits his satirical powers in a conspicuous manner. His rapier-like thrusts are made with such masterly deftness, and with such apparent lack of acerbity, that no sympathy is felt for his opponent; we are rather forced to rejoice in his utter discomfiture. The poet's skill in the involved intertwinings of Gaelic rhyme is nowhere better illustrated than in this poem:

" Bha sagart 's na criochan,
'S bu diadhaidh 'm fear-leughaidh,
Air dùnadh le creideamh
'S le eagnachd cho eudmhor.
'S b' ann a cheann-eagair
A theagasg bhi beusach,
Gun ofrail a nasgadh
Air altaireann Bhénuis."

One is forcibly struck by the numerous classical allusions in his works, but especially by his unwarranted use of Anglicisms; and although he errs less grievously, perhaps, than many of our other Gaelic bards, he is not wholly free from the sin of tautology. Indeed, several of his noblest efforts are marred in a marked degree by his tendency to employ redundant expressions. Thus, in one of his greatest compositions, "Feasgar Luain," we are forced to wade through a purposeless plethora of epithets, *e.g.*:

" Gur bachlach, dualach, casbhuidh, cuachadh,
Càradh suaineas gruag do chinn.
Gu h-àluinn, bòidheach, fàineach, òrbhuidh',
An caraibh seoighn', 's an òrdugh grinn.
Gun chron a fàs riut a dh' fhaod' aireamh
'O do bhàrr gu sàil do bhuinn;
Dhiuchd na buaidhean, òigh, mu'n cuairt duit,
Gu meudaichinn t'uaill 's gach puing";

while his "Oran an t-Samhraidh," and notably his song in praise of Gairloch, "Moladh a' Bhàird air a Thir Féin," abound in pleonastic expressions:

> " Gur h-i Gearrloch an tir bhàigheil,
> 'S an tir phàirteach, bhiadhar,
> Tir a' phailteis, tir gun ghainne,
> Tir is glainne fialachd,
> An tir bhaineach, uachdrach, mheallach,
> Chaomhach, channach, thiorail;
> Tir an arain, tìr an tachdar
> Sìthne, 's pailteas iasgaich."

Although William Ross was a native of Skye, it is a striking fact that nowhere in his works that are extant do we find any reference to the land of his birth. He was born in the year 1762 at Sithean, near the village of Broadford, where his ancestry could be traced back for several generations. His father seems to have been a man of more than average intelligence; and his calling, that of packman ("m'athair ri màlaid riamh," as the poet says of him), would undoubtedly have sharpened powers already acute, and afford him a vast and varied experience of life. There can be no doubt, however, that whatever qualities of mind the bard derived from the paternal stock, he inherited the poetic genius through his mother, who was a daughter of the famous piper and poet, John Mackay, "Am Piobaire Dall."

While he was still a lad, the family removed to Morayshire; and at the grammar-school of Forres, the future poet soon gave early promise of his latent powers. He excelled especially as a student of the ancient classics, while his frequent itineraries in the company of his father throughout the Highlands and the Isles widened his outlook and perfected his knowledge of Gaelic, of whose cultivation he was always an ardent devotee.

Once again the family residence was changed, this time to Gairloch, the land of his mother's people, where he was appointed parish schoolmaster. Ross possessed those physical and mental attributes that go to the making of the ideal teacher. His tall and commanding figure, his striking features, and his beautiful auburn hair, were qualities that endeared him to the young mind; while his engaging personality, his gift of rich humour, and his ripe scholarship, were bound to impress his older pupils.

He was a general favourite. Few could tell a tale or recount a topical incident better than he; and in the singing of a song he had no equal. In addition, he was an accomplished violinist, so that his company was much sought after, especially on market days and at marriages. He was fastidious about his own appearance; nor was he unmoved by that of others. It is related of him that once, as he met a local bard who was on the way to attend a sister's wedding, this obsession got the beter of him, so that he could not refrain from commenting on the figure cut by the latter, whose shabby coat accorded ill with his haughty bearing. Ross thus accosted him:

"'S ann tha phròis air bàrd an Rudha,
Bho'n tha phiuthar dol a phòsadh;
Ach 's neonach leam mu 'n dh' fhàg e'n tigh,
Nach d' rinn e malairt còta."

The retort of the poet from Rudha affords a direct reproof to all meddlers:

"Tha 'n còta taitinn rium fhìn—
Tha e mìn, is tha e blàth;
'S mur b'e meud do dhon-oilean,
Dh' fhaodadh tusa leigeil dha."

It is said of Ross that he frequented the tavern rather freely, an allegation to which he adverts in his poem in praise of whisky.

"Thogadh ort nach b' fheairrde mis' thu,
Gun ghoid thu mo chuid gun fhios dhomh."

There may have been some justification for the patronage he bestowed on the inn, he being early a victim to chronic asthma. This trouble eventually developed into phthisis, and he was advised to leave the moist seaboard of Gairloch for the uplands of central Perthshire.

"Dh' fheuch an fhearr a gheibh mi slàint',
A' tigh'nn gu àird nan Garbh-chrìoch."

It was then he composed "Moladh a' Bhàird air a Thìr Féin." He did not remain long there, for he was never happy; nor did he benefit much in health by the change of scene and air.

It was shortly after his return to Gairloch that he met the lady whose influence was to cloud the remainder of his short life. This was Marion Ross, a native of Stornoway, to whom he composed those soul-subduing lyrics that have no equal in our language. "Feasgar Luain" was his tribute to her on their first meeting;

"Cuachag nan Craobh" expresses the cruel torment of unrequited love; while that sad swan-song, "Oran Eile," is pervaded throughout by a note of resignation, feebly raised by the broken heart, for which this world and its affairs are resolved to nothingness:

"Cha dùisgear leam ealaidh air àill,
Cha chuirear leam dàn air dòigh;
Cha togar leam fonn air clàr,
Cha chluinnear leam gàir nan òg;
Cha dìrich mi bealach nan àrd
Le suigeart mar bha mo nòs,
Ach triallam a chadal gu bràth,
Do thalla nam bàrd nach beo";

and this wonderful genius departed for the "halls of the bards that have gone" in 1690, at the early age of twenty-six years. He lies buried in the old graveyard of Gairloch, where an unpretentious stone, with an inscription in English and Gaelic, marks his grave.

CHAPTER XV.

FAMILY HISTORY, 1800-1900.

THE MACDONALDS.

ON the death of Alexander, the first Lord MacDonald, in 1795, his oldest son, also named Alexander, succeeded. The young laird had been educated at Eton and at St. Andrews; and, like his father, he was disinclined to spend much of his time in his native island. Indeed, he resided for the most part in England and abroad; but when he did revisit his home he was always active with schemes to improve the lot of his people. As one writer says of him: "He lived on terms of cordial intimacy with his clansmen and tenantry, whose interests it was his chief pleasure to promote; while the greater proportion of his income was expended on the improvement and the decoration of his estate." It was he who, in 1815, built the present castle at Armadale. His intention, originally, was to have it constructed of the marble of Strath, a project that was not carried out. The mansion was designed by a certain Gillespic Graham, and although it is externally so very uninspiring, its internal architecture is both elegant and grand. Its magnificent staircase, made of the marble of Strath, its oak panellings, its noble stained window, are features that make some amends for an eminently commonplace exterior.

At the behest of the laird, young plantations of trees were formed in Sleat and elsewhere in Skye; while the development of the fishing industry was his ever-present concern. At Kyle Akin he established a "general stores," the first shop in Skye, in order that their simple needs might be the more accessible to his people. All were welcomed to his castle at Armadale, with its ever-open door and its kindly cheer; even during its owner's prolonged sojournings abroad, the hospitality of that mansion was never stinted; for his factor had instructions to attend to the convenience of any who might care to enter. He was so highly respected by his people, that when he toured his estates his principal tenants vied with one another in their endeavours to do him honour.

Owing to his absences from home, he was ignorant of the extent to which emigration was draining the manhood of his clan; while it has been said that he knew nothing of the ruthless evictions that were perpetrated during his chiefship.

In the portrait that is extant of him, there is the pleasing expression of a cultured man, an eye radiating kindliness and good sense, although at the same time betokening a disposition suggestive of reserve, if not bordering on shyness.

Sir Alexander, the tenth baronet, and second Lord MacDonald, died unmarried, in June, 1824, when he was succeeded by his brother,

Godfrey, Third Lord MacDonald.

Godfrey Wentworth was born in Edinburgh in the year 1775. Educated at Harrow, he proceeded thence to Oxford, leaving the latter institution to enter upon a military career in 1794, when he was barely twenty years of age. He was an athletic and handsome man, being well over six feet in height; and when, five years afterwards, he returned to England from active service in Holland, an event happened that was to be of momentous consequence to the House of Sleat. The youthful soldier fell in love with a young English lady, Louisa Maria "Edsir," the offspring of a morganatic alliance between the Duke of Gloucester, brother of George III., and the beautiful Lady Almeria Carpenter, daughter of the first Earl of Tyrconell.

Owing to the barrier set by the young lady's guardians to the marriage, an elopement was resolved upon, and carried out. The ardent lovers agreed to live together as husband and wife; and, as Godfrey was still a native of Scotland, for nothing had supervened whereby he should be denationalised, such a contract as he then formed constituted valid wedlock according to the law of his land. When, in addition, he returned to England in 1803, with the rank of colonel, and was duly married at Norwich by an ordained clergyman, the legitimation of his child, Alexander, born before that ceremony, was thus unquestionably established; for, as Lord Skerrington avers in his decree, in the case brought by Sir Alexander MacDonald of Thorpe Hall against Lord MacDonald in the year 1910: "Upon the evidence, I am satisfied that Godfrey MacDonald's domicile of origin was Scottish; and there is no reason to suppose that, prior to the year 1803, he had acquired a domicile in England. . . . It follows, therefore, that the pursuer's grandfather, Alexander, was legitimated by the marriage of his parents in 1803; and that decree must be pronounced to that effect."

As is well known, however, it happened that, on Godfrey's death in 1832, the succession devolved on the second son, the presumption being that the first was illegitimate. The latter succeeded to the English estates of Thorpe and Gunthwaite, while Godfrey, his younger brother, entered into possession of the estates and became chief of his clan. It is fitting here to observe that, although succession to estates is determined by law, the dignity of chief rests solely on the choice of the members of the clan.

GODFREY, FOURTH LORD MACDONALD.

This young chief, living somewhat extravagantly, soon found himself deeply involved in debt. In order to meet the demands of creditors, he was forced, in 1847, to sell portions of the family patrimony, including the whole of North Uist, and Kilmuir in Skye. He was married to a Yorkshire lady, and they had two sons, who became successively chiefs, namely, Somerled, who died unmarried in 1875, at the early age of 25 years, and Ronald Archibald, the present holder of the dignity, the twenty-second chief of Clan Uisdean, and the twenty-fourth in descent from Somerled, "Rex Insularum."

At this stage, it may be of interest to quote a statement from the "Book of Clan Ranald," by Neil MacVurich, of the long line of sennachies and bards in the family of Clan Ranald (there seem to have been eighteen of them from their progenitor Muireach Albanach). "I have," he declares, "no male descendants to set down of Donald, Lord of the Isles, except Sir Donald (this was his own contemporary, "Do'ull a' Chogaidh"), son of Donald, son of Sir James, son of Donald Gorm Og, son of Gillespic, son of Donald Gorm Sagsanach, son of Donald Gorm, who was killed at Eilean Donain, who was son of Donald Gruamach, son of Donald Gallach, son of Hugh," the first of Sleat.

" 'Nuair dh' éireas Clann Dòmhnuill
Na leomhainn tha garg,
Na beò-bheithir, mhór, leathann,
Chonnspuinnich, gharbh;

DUNVEGAN CASTLE.

Luchd sheasamh na còrach,
Do'n òrdugh lamh-dhearg;
Mo dhòigh-sa gu'm ghòrach
Dhaibh, tòiseachadh oirbh."

THE MACLEODS.

JOHN NORMAN, TWENTY-FIRST CHIEF.

As has already been stated, General MacLeod, the twentieth chief, died in 1801, and was succeeded by his son, John Norman, who was the offspring of his second marriage. On his homecoming from Edinburgh, in 1809, as a young man, a song of welcome was composed by the clan bard, Donald MacLeod, the first stanza being:

"Tha m' inntinn air lasadh
Aig uiread mo chlaisneachd
Mu sgeul tha air tachairt
MacLeòid air tighinn dachaidh
Gu tùr nan clach snaighte
Far am b' fhùirneasach sgaptach do chàirdean."

For some years the young chief had been engaged in a costly law-suit with MacLeod of Gesto over the question of boundaries, the latter winning his case. When the lease of the farm of Gesto expired in 1825, the chief had his revenge by evicting his tenant, incurring, by his action, the displeasure of many of the leading men of the clan.

The dispossessed clansman was Neil MacLeod, the last of the name in Gesto. He is said to have been somewhat eccentric in his manner; but he was a keen student of the lore of Skye, and an outstanding authority on the art of Piobaireachd. The Rev. Alexander MacGregor says of him: "He knew almost every piobaireach in existence, their names, composers, origin, and the causes for composing them." MacGregor saw in his possession a large MS. collection of this branch of music, containing about 200 pieces, some from their appearance were distinctly ancient, though others, deciphered on different paper, were obviously more modern. Of them he published about a score, the compilation being known as "The Gesto Collection."

The "Gesto" hospital at Edinbane is named after a son of this last MacLeod of Gesto, who, after having amassed a considerable fortune in India, as an indigo planter, returned to his native island,

and bought the lands of Greshornish and Orbost. He gave munificently of his wealth, setting apart an enormous sum of money for the endowment of the hospital, in which much good work has since been done for the suffering poor of Skye. On the death of this benefactor, the estates passed to his grand-nephew, who assumed the name of Robertson-MacLeod.

In the early part of the century, the parliamentary representative for the county of Inverness was Charles Grant of Glenelg, who won the election of 1826 by a vast majority over Godfrey, third Lord MacDonald. On the passing of the First Reform Act in 1832, the Chief of MacLeod opposed the "sitting" member, by whom he was, however, defeated by a few votes.

This chief was married to an English lady named Anne Stephenson; they had a family of six daughters and two sons, of whom Norman, the elder, succeeded to the chiefship on the death of his father in 1835.

Norman, Twenty-second Chief.

The chief was only twenty years of age on his accession. He was a linguist of considerable ability, having spent some time, both in Germany and in France, in order to make himself proficient in the languages of these countries. In addition, he had studied law, became a member of one of the Inns of Court; but he had never practised to any great extent.

During those times of trial and grave anxiety that followed the failure of the potato crop in 1845 the chief was seldom from home; but was constantly engaged in devising means for the alleviation of distress. The noted generosity of his house was never better exemplified than on this occasion; it is now no secret that he had spent so much of the family inheritance in supplying the immediate wants of his people that he was faced with ruin. It was in consonance with the altruism of his nature, and the practical bent of his mind, that he did not consider it beneath his dignity to become even a wage-earner, if nothing better would offer, in order to recoup the fallen fortunes of the estate. He, therefore, accepted an appointment as a clerk in the Home Office; acquitting himself there with such ability that for several years he held the post of Principal Secretary in the Department of Science and Art. He continued in office until his 69th year, when he retired as a pensioner.

He was a man of splendid physique, always active and alert, and endowed with a mind of transparent disinterestedness, prompted solely by a desire to do good—a man worthy of the name of chief, by the most rigorous connotation of the term.

He was twice married, first to the Hon. Louise St. John, and, on her death, to a Hungarian lady, Baroness Hanna. By the first marriage he had a family of four sons, three of whom are still living. These are Roderick Charles, a Canon of the Church of England, an able student of Highland history, and presently resident in Morpeth; Sir Reginald, now living in retirement, after a long period of government service, culminating in the office of Permanent Under-Secretary for Scotland; and Norman Magnus, who was born in 1839, and became chief in the year 1895.

NORMAN MAGNUS, TWENTY-THIRD CHIEF OF MACLEOD.

As a young man he chose a military career, being also for several years in the diplomatic service in South Africa. He was responsible for the introduction of Coolie labour into Eastern South Africa; while in the turmoil of 1878 and 1879, with the Basutos and Zulus, he played a prominent part.

As a chief, he has always been active with schemes for the amelioration of the lot of his people; and over thirty years ago he was busy with the formation of small-holdings and the erection of good houses for his tenants, who became peasant-proprietors after the repayment, on easy terms, of the initial outlay. A man of patriarchal appearance, this venerable chief, now in his 90th year, is in very truth the father of his people.

**" Na Leòdaich am pòr glan,
Cha b' òlach 'ur siol:
Dream rìoghail gun fhòtus,
Nan gòrsaid, 's nan sgiath.
Gur neartmhor, ro eòlach,
'Ur 'n òigfhir, 's 'ur liath;
Gur h-e cruadal 'ur dual'chas
A dh' fhuasgail sibh riamh."**

CHAPTER XVI.

THE LESSER CLANS AND SEPTS OF SKYE.

The MacKinnons.

THIS clan occupied Strath from very early times. The Rev. John MacKinnon, who wrote the "New Statistical Account" for his parish in 1841, says that the district was "known to have been populated by the MacKinnons since 1354"; and there is a mention of Castle Moil in an Act of Council of 1360, where it is referred to as Castle Findanus—a name which suggests that it was even then in the possession of the MacKinnons. Tradition has it that the family occupied the old fort of Dunringill, on the shore of Loch Slapin, before they went to live in Castle Moil, or Dunakyn, as the latter is called; but for this there is, of course, no authoritative evidence.

Dean Monro, who made a tour of his diocese in 1549, makes mention both of Dunringill and of Dunakyn as castles in Skye; but he does not say whether or not they were then occupied. It has already been shown that, when the attempt was made in 1513 to raise Sir Donald of Lochalsh to the dignity of Lord of the Isles, the venue of the rebels was Dunakyn.

In an account written in 1577 it is stated that "Strathvardeil perteins to MacKynvin, given to him by MacConneil for to judge and decide all questions and debates that happens to fall between parties for playing of draughts and dice. It will raise eight score men. He has a castle called Dewnakin."

In consequence of the relationship they bore in the past to the Lords of the Isles, the MacKinnons had always placed themselves under the banner of the MacDonalds of Skye. During the Commonwealth they fought against Cromwell, and were present with the other clans at the Battle of Worcester. In the first Jacobite Rebellion they took the field under the Chief of Sleat, a contingent of one hundred and fifty of the clan fighting at Sheriffmuir. For the part they took in that rising, the estate was forfeited; but it was purchased for the family by Sir John Grant in 1723. The chief of the time, Iain Dubh, was pardoned in 1727, and the estates were restored to him. Ever loyal to the Jacobite cause, they showed no hesitancy in ranging themselves on the side of Prince Charlie, when the Highlanders were once again called to arms in 1745. In that rebellion the MacKinnons were commanded by the chief in person, and by two members of his house, namely, Captain Lachlan I. of Corry, and Captain John of Elgol, the latter of whom is so well known to fame for the part he played, with his chief, in aiding the Prince's escape from Skye. The chief and his captain were both captured, and suffered imprisonment for their activity in that adventure. On the passing of the Indemnity Act, they were released with other Jacobite prisoners, after having been twelve months in a prison-ship near Tilbury Fort. When the news of his pardon was being conveyed to him, the chief was reminded, by the then Attorney-General, of the debt of gratitude he owed his king for allowing him his freedom to return home. The answer of the old warrior chief was in keeping with his fearless and independent spirit: "Had I the king in my power, as I am in his," he declared, "I would return him the compliment by sending him back to his own country." His manliness made a deep impression on his persecutors, for "they saw he was involved in the rebellion from the spirit of chivalry." In "The Lyon in Mourning" it is stated of him by Bishop Forbes that "he used to say he hoped God would not take him off the earth, but on the field of battle," fighting for the House of Stuart.

This chief married, as his second wife, a daughter of MacGillechallum Camachasach (MacLeod of Raasay of "The '45"), whose son became guardian to his nephews of Strath, Charles and Lachlan, on the death of their father in 1756. Young MacGillechallum did all in his power to preserve the estate in possession of the family of MacKinnon; but, in 1765, it was privately sold by MacKinnon of Mishnish to the MacDonalds of Sleat. It has remained the property of the latter House, with the exception of the district of Strathaird, which has since frequently changed ownership, and was then possessed by a Mr. MacAlister.

Several members of the family of MacKinnon have distinguished themselves in the service of the church of their native island. Reference has already been made to the Rev. Neil MacKinnon, the first Protestant minister of Skye. He was the nephew of Sir L. MacKinnon, fourteenth chief of Strath. In the year 1641 he was translated to Sleat, when he was succeeded by his third son, Donald, in the ministry of Strath. His wife was Johnat, daughter of MacLeod of Drynoch.

In 1632 the Rev. John MacKinnon was presented by John, Bishop of the Isles, to the chapel of Eynort of Minginish, and also to that of St. Assind of Bracadale.

The famous hereditary succession of ministers of this family began in Strath with Donald, the grandson of the poet, Lachlan Mac Thearlaich Oig. The Rev. Donald was born in 1731; and, after a period of service in the Outer Isles, was translated to Strath in 1771. It was he who constructed the famous genealogical tree of his clan. He was succeeded by his son, John, the compiler of the "New Statistical Account" for his parish, and the father of many eminent sons. One of them, the Rev. Dr. Donald MacKinnon, completed the ministerial succession in Strath; another was Surgeon-General Sir William MacKinnon.

The crest of this clan consists of a boar's head, erased, holding in its mouth the shank-bone of a deer proper. In addition to this design, they show in their arms the triple castle of the MacLeods, and also the hand holding the crosslet, emblematic of their relationship with the MacDonalds. The supporters of the arms are a lion dexter, and sinister, a leopard; both proper. Above the escutcheon appears the Latin motto, "Audentes fortuna Juvat," and below occurs in Gaelic, "Cuimhnich Bàs Alpin." The badge of the MacKinnons is the Pine.

THE NICOLSONS.

The origin of this sept is very obscure, and those stray references we meet with in the early records concerning it are of little significance. Hugh MacDonald, the Sleat sennachie, who wrote a history of the MacDonalds in the reign of Charles II., says that Somerled, in his expedition to the northern isles of the Hebrides, "killed MacLier in Strath, and Olay the Red killed MacNicol in North Uist, likewise." This authority also makes mention of "MacNicol of Portray" as one of the sixteen members of Council of the Lord of the Isles; and as that dignity was ended in 1493, the Nicolsons must have been, even at that early time, of some consequence in Skye.

The Rev. A. Campbell, who had been successively schoolmaster and parish minister at Portree, towards the end of the eighteenth century, says that the Nicolsons had occupied Scorrybreck since the time of the Danes; while the Rev. J. Morrison of Bragar, who, under the name of "Indweller," wrote an account of his native island in 1680, mentions the Nicolsons as one of the three oldest clans of Lewis; and he states that the heiress of that family, a lady named Margaret, had been forcibly espoused by a MacLeod after he had massacred all the males of her kindred. The tradition persists in Lewis that the Nicolsons were in possession of the island before the MacLeods, and that for three centuries they had occupied the stronghold of Castle Sween.

Skene says that the Nicolsons are "descendants of MacKyrcol," who lived in Coigeach and Assynt from about 1200 to 1450; and it has been suggested that the variant, "Mac Reacail," may be referable to this eponym. This form is, however, only a case of consonantal change for ease in pronunciation. In "Collectanea de Rebus Albanicis," Gregory quotes a MS. wherein is given a genealogical list of chiefs, going back from the year 1450, as follows:—John, Ewen, John, Nicail, Aigi (Hugh), Neailb, Nicail, Gregall, Gillemuir, "son of Neailb, son of Torquil, son of Totin, son of Thorstein, son of Deacuil, son of Erbhle, son of Harold, son of Murdoch, son of Fogal, son of Paul, son of Allan, son of Carfin, son of Teague, son of Olave, son of Torc of Dublin, son of Harold, son of Osman, son of Ard." If we assign twenty years to each, this would place the last-named in the early part of the tenth century.

The first authentic reference to this family in Skye occurs in the reign of James IV., when, in 1507, we find that royal protection was extended to "Mulconil MacNicol and others of Trouternes." The person against whom this guarantee had been craved, and granted, was the fratricide and usurper, Gillespic Dubh, a son of the first chief of Sleat, who, after having gained the royal favour, became bailie of Trotarnish in 1511. Again, when, in the year 1580, a summons "was raised" at the instance of John, Bishop of the Isles, against many leading men in Skye, who had failed to pay the teinds due to the church, the name of "McConneill McNicoll of Trouternes" is cited. In the following year the king conferred the confiscated property of several island chiefs on the Bishop of the Isles; and among the dispossessed were "Macconeill Mak-Nicoll, officar of Trouterness, and Nicoll his brother," both of whom were declared rebels, and were "denounced at the horn" for their remissness in the payment of church dues.

After that John, who is mentioned by Gregory as chief in 1500, Malcolm, John, Malcolm, Donald, John, and Norman. The last marked the end of the line of the chiefs of Scorrybreck, and he emigrated to Tasmania in the early years of the nineteenth century. Of the foregoing, there were some who were ministers as well as chiefs, the most notable being the Rev. Donald, who was an Episcopalian minister in Trotarnish from 1663 until 1696. On account of his uncompromising attitude to the re-establishment of Presbyterianism in Scotland, he relinquished his charge in the latter year. He died in 1697, leaving an enormous progeny of more than a score of children. One of these, Alexander, was the last clergyman in Skye of the Episcopalian church that was instituted during the reign of Charles II.

Malcolm, the great-grandson of the Rev. Donald Nicolson, a man of striking personality, was greatly revered in Skye because of his unswerving loyalty to the customs of the past and his eagerness to foster the traditions of his race. The unbounding liberality of this chief was remembered for several generations.

Donald, the grandfather of the last chief, was married to Margaret, sister of Sir John MacDonald of Scalpay, Adjutant-General of the Forces. Two of their sons were officers in the Army, the older, Lieutenant Malcolm, being a man of powerful physique and commanding presence. His promising career was cut short by a fever in India, where also died his brother, Lieutenant George Nicolson. A Captain James Nicolson, grandson of the chief, Donald, died of wounds in Malta in 1812. Colonel Macinnes, in his "The Brave Sons of Skye," makes mention of a Captain Samuel Nicolson of Tote.

The armorial bearings of this family consist of a battleaxe surmounting a shield, which in its upper portion is red with two stars; while in the lower half, which is white, is a crescent moon, and underneath is the motto, "With Heart and Hand." The badge is the Trailing Azalea, a plant that grows abundantly on the hills of Skye.

THE MACASKILLS.

The MacAskills are one of the oldest families in Skye. They are traditionally said to be of Irish extraction, the account being that an ancestor, who had been embroiled in dissensions in Ireland over the succession to a throne, was forced to leave that country and seek the protection of MacLeod of Harris, who gave him lands in Skye. The root, "Asketill," however, points to a Norse origin for this clan, the word meaning "sacrificial vessel of the gods."

From very early times this sept occupied the district of Rudha 'n Dunain, where the ruins of the family residence may still be seen. Before the MacDonalds took possession of Dun Sgathaich, it is said to have been held by the MacAskills as wardens of that fort under the Norse kings of Man. In after days, when rieving prevailed, they filled the office of *comes litoris*, or coast-watcher, to the MacLeods; and one of them always did duty as commodore on board the principal galley of the chief of that clan.

Mention has already been made of the exploit of a member of this family, one, William MacAskill, who played such a prominent role in the discomfiture of the forces of the Lord of the Isles at the Battle of Sligachan, early in the sixteenth century. Tradition credits the clan with men of phenomenal physique and extraordinary strength.

Many members of the family served the country, both in the Army and the Navy, and several are known to fame. Two brothers were officers in the American War of Independence—one, Captain John, who was tacksman of Rudha, and a younger brother, William, who afterwards rose to the rank of major-general, and acted for a time as Governor of Mauritius. He died in 1815. Another clansman who had a distinguished military career was Major-General Sir John MacAskill. He entered the service of the East India Company, and took part in the fighting in India in the early years of the nineteenth century. After the massacre of General Elphinstone and his army by hostile Afghan tribes in 1841, and when Sir Robert Sale was dangerously beleagured in Jellalabad, General MacAskill, as second in command to General Pollock, led the relieving army, and rendered distinguished service in that brilliant piece of campaigning. He was serving under Sir Hugh Gough when the Sikhs broke out in rebellion in 1845; and in a minor engagement he was mortally wounded as he was leading his men to the charge. Three of his sons attained commissioned rank, serving chiefly in India.

THE BETHUNES OR BEATONS.

References have been made to members of this famous family on several occasions in connection with their services both to Medicine and to the Church. We meet with the name in Skye as early as the middle of the fourteenth century, when mention is made of a certain John Bethune, who married Margaret, daughter of the second chief of the MacLeods. They early figure as hereditary physicians to the MacDonalds; and the first of that illustrious line is said to have been one of the name of Peter, who, for his services, was given a tract of land, free of all burdens, on condition that he trained one of his sons, preferably the oldest, if he showed any aptitude, to continue the practice of the art for the benefit of his chief. Of his family, the person chosen to carry on the professional succession was the second son, a man named Angus; and he was one of the most noted of his race. He wrote a treatise on the practice of medicine.

The empiric skill of the family was transmitted in unbroken succession from father to son until we come to one who was perhaps the most distinguished of the line. That was Neil, the great-grandson of Angus; he lived during the latter part of the sixteenth and the early portion of the seventeenth century. Said to have been illiterate, he yet was possessed of a wonderful knowledge of herbs, and especially of their medicinal properties, which he was able to extract in a manner known to himself alone. His skill was so great, not only as a physician, but as surgeon as well, that, according to Martin, his marvellous cures were "attributed to a compact with the devil."

In the eighteenth century, when men who were duly qualified practitioners began to appear, these empiricists naturally came to lose their prestige. Then the genius of the race began to express itself in other spheres of usefulness, and the Church claimed many of them. Of these, the Rev. John Bethune was minister of Bracadale, where he died in 1707; and he has been described as "an able divine and a learned physician." His son, the Rev. Kenneth Bethune, a scholar of note, was minister of Kilmuir, where he died in 1739; while the Rev. William Bethune, who served the parish of Duirinish, and wrote the "Old Statistical Account" of that district in 1791, was one of those ministers who so impressed Dr. Johnson, both by their learning and their lofty morality, that he says he could not converse with them "without wishing, as his respect, that they had not been Presbyterians."

THE MACQUEENS.

The MacQueens are said by tradition to have been descendants of a member of the human dowry conferred on the daughter of the Irish chief, O'Cathan, who was married to Angus, "Lord of Trotternish," a son of the Lord of the Isles. The gift consisted of twenty men drawn from each of three tribes; and, according to the Rev. Alexander MacGregor, who was parish minister of Kilmuir about the middle of the nineteenth century, the MacQueens were the descendants of one band, and they occupied Garrafad for three hundred years. A branch of the family held the lands of Rigg and Toterome for a time.

Frequent references are made to members of this clan in the history of Skye. Several of them had served the Church, and a remarkable record stands to their name in that son succeeded father as minister in the parish of Snizort for four generations. They were Archibald, who became Episcopalian minister there in 1642; Donald, his son and successor, who, despite his non-jurancy, is said to have been in "possession of that church" in 1710; the Rev. Archibald, erudite, pious, and zealous in doing good; and finally the Rev. William, who served the disjunct parish of Snizort at the same time that his famous brother, Donald, was the parish minister of Kilmuir. Mention has also been made of the Rev. Angus MacQueen and the Rev. Edmund MacQueen, who were ministers in the parish of Sleat.

Many of them are known to fame as soldiers. There were two who took part in the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745—one, Malcolm, a loyalist, who fell on Culloden, and another, a Hanoverian, was an officer under Major Hugh MacDonald of Armadale, who commanded the contingent of MacDonald Militia. A grandson of the Rev. Dr. Donald MacQueen of Kilmuir, a man of striking appearance, rendered distinguished service during the Peninsular War, and was present in almost all the sanguinary engagements of that titanic conflict. He died in 1836. He had two sons—one a lieutenant, who fought in the first Afghan War, and in the Sikh Wars, and the other, Captain George MacQueen, who distinguished himself in the Indian Mutiny.

THE MARTINS.

Like the MacQueens, the Martins are said to have been descendants of the men brought to Trotarnish by Nighean Chathain; though another tradition has it that their progenitor was a noted sea-riever named Aonghas na Gaoithe (Angus of the Wind), who settled at Marishader.

One of the most notable members of the sept was Martin Martin, who, in 1716, wrote an important treatise on the Western Isles—a work which is our best authority for the social conditions in Skye at that time. He had been educated for the medical profession; but it would appear that he had never practised. For several years he acted as tutor in the family of MacLeod at Dunvegan. He died, unmarried, in London.

A member of the family, who occupied the lands of Bealach and Duntulm, is still remembered as a man of huge build and prodigious strength. This was Martin of Bealach who lived during the latter half of the eighteenth century. In a lament of high poetic merit composed on his death by Neil MacNab of Kilvaxter, his praises are sung as follows:

"Bha thu foghainteach làidir
Bha thu spioradail tàbhachdach ciùin.
Dreach an t-samhraidh mar shnuadh ort
Cha robh naimhdeas no fuachd 'nad do ghnuis
Fiamh a' ghair' air do mhalaidh
Pailt bhlàths ann an sealladh do shùl
'S mór a chaoidh thug do bhàs
Do 'n mhuinntir a dh' fhag thu 's an Dùn."

The saintly Donald Martin, who succeeded the Rev. Dr. Donald MacQueen as parish minister of Kilmuir in 1785, was of the family of Marishader.

The armorial bearings of this sept are composed of three wolves' heads with the crest, which is a tiger rampant holding an arrow point downwards, the supporters, consisting of two tigers. The motto is "Constant and Faithful."

THE CLAN MACINNES.

Hugh MacDonald, the historian of Sleat, says that this clan once occupied the lands of Morvern; and he recounts the important role they played under Somerled against the Danes.

The first of the family to settle in Skye is traditionally said to have been a certain "Neil of the Bow," so called on account of his prowess as an archer. On one occasion, the sennachie says, his cattle were being raided by a party of MacLeods, near Corry in Strath. Neil attacked the rievers single-handed, killing twelve of them and recovering his stolen stock. His skill was transmitted to his descendants, who were noted archers; which may be the reason why they formed such an important unit in the ranks of the Clan Mackinnon, to whose chief they acted as bodyguard in times of war.

Their bearings consist of a bee sucking a thistle, and surmounting a shield, the upper part of which is white, the lower green, with three stars. Underneath this is the motto, "E Labore Dulcedo" (Pleasure is the outcome of exertion). The badge of the clan is the holly.

CHAPTER XVII.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS, 1800-1900.

THE CHURCH.

IN dealing with the general conditions of the people during the latter portion of the previous century, reference was made to the buoyancy of spirits that prevailed in the face of great trials. They had songs for every labour, and they took care to sing them. They were passionately fond of the dance; and the fiddle, if not the bagpipes, was kept in every house; and most could handle these instruments with skill. The ancient tale was listened to with the closest attention, while the works of the bards were held in the highest degree of reverence.

As the century advanced towards its close, however, this native joyousness of heart began gradually to subside. The cruel reality of emigration had cast its shadow over the whole island, as near and dear ones were severed, in many cases for ever, from those left behind. The separation was always a poignant one; and the sight of the emigrant ship, with its sorrowing human freight, sailing away to unknown shores, made an impression on those who remained that time could not erase, with the result that there was induced a gravity of outlook on life that the people had never before experienced. Music and the tale now failed to bring consolation to the heavy heart; and many came to feel that their sorrows could be assuaged only "in the ways of religion." Coincident with the new frame of mind, an evangelising spirit was abroad. In the year 1805, one of its agents came to Skye, in the person of a certain John Farquharson—a man who, though practically illiterate, conveyed his message with an enthusiasm that surmounted all bounds. Many travelled long distances to hear this perfervid evangelist proclaim the gospel in a new light; and his labours were rewarded by numerous converts. Among the most noted of these was blind Donald Munro, who had lost his eyesight as a result of smallpox when he was about fourteen years of age.

He was born at Achtaleathan, near Portree, about 1773; and died in 1830. This wonderful man, who has been called the "Father of Evangelical Religion in Skye," had been, in his early days, the doyen of fiddlers in the district of Trotarnish. That instrument, which had erstwhile been the pride of his heart, became, in his changed state, the means of his mortification; while the genius that had been so ably displayed in the musician began, under the new influence, to manifest itself as powerfully in the missioner whose burning zeal created a real revival wherever he preached. By the force of his personality, and the power of his eloquence, he exerted a tremendous sway over the minds of the people; and when, as on one occasion, he asked his hearers to show their renunciation of all forms of "worldly pleasures" by bringing their musical instruments to the head of Loch Snizort, on a day appointed, for a public conflagration, the response was so general that a veritable "mountain" of fiddles and bagpipes was there accumulated, and consigned to the flames.

The orthodox church looked with scorn on this new movement that, as yet, touched the lay population only, and was confined almost wholly to Trotarnish. Soon, however, it was to permeate Duirinish and Bracadale, chiefly through the instrumentality of the Rev. John Shaw, who ministered successively in these parishes. Mr. Shaw had been appointed assistant to the Rev. Mr. Suter of Duirinish in the year 1811. Two years later, on the death of Dr. Roderick MacLeod, he was translated to Bracadale. He has been described "as an excellent and faithful minister"; and, by all accounts, he worthily deserved that praise. He died in the 39th year of his age, and the 12th of his ministry, and was succeeded by the Rev. Mr. Roderick, the youngest son of the Rev. Mr Malcolm of Snizort.

A galaxy of able lay preachers now arose in the northern and western parts of Skye—men who, with the burning fervour of proselytes, endeavoured to "hasten the Kingdom of Glory." Among them were Donald Munro, already mentioned; Alexander MacLeod, tacksman of Ungnacille; Donald MacQueen, and several others; and their ranks were greatly strengthened by the fact that the Rev. Mr. Roderick now came under the influence of the new faith.

We have already seen that, on the death of Mr. Shaw, he had been translated from Lyndale, where he had served as a missionary, to the parish of Bracadale in the year 1823. Possessed of a striking personality and a rare turn of eloquence, the young minister ably maintained and furthered the pioneer work of his predecessor; when, in 1838, he returned to his native parish, he carried into his new sphere of labour the zeal and the energy that had produced such remarkable results in his last charge.

In Bracadale the cause of evangelism suffered no arrestment when it lost the services of Mr. Roderick; for his successor, the Rev. John Glass, was a man richly indued with the new faith. The influence of these two ministers was powerfully felt even in the neighbouring parishes; with the result that many developed such strictness of outlook that they deemed it not improper to refrain from baptising their children, and from partaking of the Sacrament, if they disapproved of the officiating clergyman, or even if they thought that an unconverted person was present at the "Lord's Table." Indeed, this attitude of mind had become so settled in Skye that the Rev. A. Clark, minister of Duirinish, writing in 1841, says "it has to some extent come to be regarded as a proof of piety to avoid partaking of the sacrament"; and he declares that communion services had been in abeyance in his own parish for eleven years, until about 1840, "when thirty-five persons partook of the sacrament."

Those who came under the power of the new faith based their principles of conduct on the tenets of the Puritans. All forms of secular recreation were unsparingly condemned by the preachers; and their renunciation was heartily observed by the people. "I have raised the standard against shinty and tobacco both," writes Mr. Roderick, "and with some measure of success."

Such, then, was the state of affairs in Skye when the Disruption took place in 1843. The people of the North and West of the island were ripe for secession, and showed it in no uncertain way. Writing in 1841, the Rev. Coll MacDonald, parish minister of Portree, speaks of the loyalty of his people to the Established Church: "So inviolable is their attachment to it," says he, "that lately some of them, hearing of disputes which at that moment unfortunately disturbed and agitated our venerable church, and dreading that these arose from the hostility of Roman Catholics and other sectarians, were heard solemnly to declare, in presence of the writer of these pages, that sooner than the church of their fathers should suffer violence or change, and far less annihilation, they would suffer their heads to be cut off"; and he observes elsewhere: "There are no sectarians of any description in this parish." How far he misunderstood the temper of the people, subsequent events prove; for, when the schism took place, the great majority of his congregation on the mainland of Skye threw in their lot with the Free Church; and practically the whole population of Raasay and Rona seceded.

The same tale could be told of the other parishes in the north and west of Skye; but only a few families left the establishment in Sleat; and still less in Strath, the latter parish being long looked upon by the adherents of the Free Church as "the home of infidelity."

Of the ministers of Skye, all remained faithful to the old church with two exceptions, namely, the Rev. Roderick MacLeod of Snizort and the Rev. John Glass of Bracadale. These two dedicated themselves, body and soul, to the cause of the new church; and, though for many years they laboured under grave difficulties, their work was greatly lightened by that whole-hearted zeal, the faithful adherence, and the unfailing generosity which one always finds associated with any new movement. For many years all their meetings were held in the open air. The congregation of the Free Church of Snizort was refused a site for a church for many years. The people met for worship in the open; and, as Mr. Roderick's successor, the Rev. Joseph Lamont, observes, "my predecessor often preached with the hailstones dancing on his forehead, his hearers wiping away the snow before they would sit down; and, when the shower was passed, they could not be distinguished from the ground, except by their faces."

This state of affairs continued until the munificent Major Fraser entered into possession of a portion of the north of Skye. He readily granted a site for a church, which was built at Uig, contributed generously to its building fund, declining to exact any rent for it during his life-time.

The prejudice against the new sect was as marked in the other parishes of Skye as it was in Snizort. The petitions of the people of Portree for a site on which to build a church were scorn-fully rejected; and the pleas of the adherents in Kilmuir went unheeded until the year 1860. Indeed, if all accounts be true, such was the bitterness shown to the Free Church, and we have the testimony of the Rev. Mr. Reid of Portree for it, that several people had been evicted from their holdings for no other reason than that they were members of the new church.

A few particulars concerning the ministers who served in the several parishes of Skye at this time now fall to be recorded. We have seen that the Rev. Alexander Campbell was the incumbent at Portree at the beginning of the nineteenth century. He was a graduate in Arts of the University of Aberdeen, and on the completion of his course there he was appointed schoolmaster and catechist at Portree, by the Commission of the Royal Bounty, in the year 1791. In the last year of the century he became minister of the parish, as successor to the Rev. John Nicolson. At the early age of forty-one years he was killed by falling from the top of a stair in his house, and the death of their minister under such tragic circumstances, and in the prime of life, made a deep impression on his parishioners. It was said of him then that "his erudition was varied and extensive, and he was noted for his liberality and benevolence." He took a deep interest in the lore of the past, and was a gleaner of note of the poetry that still floated about on the breath of tradition; while he himself was a poet of no mean order. Nor did he neglect the primary duties of his calling, but laboured indefatigably for the spiritual benefit of his flock. In 1791 he was commissioned to compile the Statistical Account for the Parish of Portree, and, as he was a native of the island, he was well qualified for the work.

This man of sterling qualities was succeeded, in 1811, by the Rev. Coll MacDonald. "Mr. Coll" was a man of forceful character and great industry. In 1825 he succeeded in building a church for the parish, the manse having been constructed in 1811; and, through his influence and zeal for education, he was responsible for the establishment of two schools, one in his own parish and the other in that of Snizort. He has been described as a man of "high moral worth"; and the account goes on to say that "he was always ready to forward the best interests of the poor, and to give sound direction and advice in matters both sacred and secular." He wrote the "New Statistical Account" for his parish, a production that stamps him at once as a "man of affairs." In the bitterness of the strife that centred around the Disruption his name was much maligned; while from the great numbers that defected from his charge, it would appear that his ministry failed to appeal to those who were carried away by the new evangelical movement in this part of Skye. He died in 1854 at the age of eighty-one years, and was succeeded by the Rev. H. MacArthur, who had been appointed his assistant during the previous year. Mr. MacArthur served the congregation until 1867, when he was followed by the Rev. John Darroch, M.A., who, in 1898, was succeeded by the Rev. A. Black, the present incumbent.

The first minister of the Free Church of Portree was the Rev. Duncan MacEachran. He was admitted to this church in 1849; but remained only for two years, when he chose to go to Cromarty. After him the Rev. James Reid was settled on the congregation in 1853, and, for the long period of forty years, he faithfully served the church. This mild-mannered and cultured gentleman was greatly beloved by the people of the parish; though the last years of his life were clouded by the secession of a large number of his congregation in 1893. The Rev. Mr. Reid died in 1896, and was followed by the Rev. Norman MacLeod, who had been appointed colleague and successor two years previously.

The first minister of the Free Church in Raasay was the Rev. Mr. MacDougall, who was inducted there in 1851. It was during the following years that several townships on this island were cleared; and the ruthless work so weighed on the mind of the minister that he resigned this charge in 1855. His successor, the Rev. Mr. Kippen, remained there until 1868; and in the following year came the young and able Mr. Galbraith, who was called to Ferintosh in 1890.

In the adjacent parish of Snizort the Rev. Malcolm MacLeod ministered until his death, in 1833, when the Rev. Simon MacLachlan was presented to the charge. Five years afterwards, on Mr. MacLachlan's translation to Cawdor, the pastorate devolved on his predecessor's famous son, the Rev. Mr. Roderick MacLeod, who returned to his native parish from Bracadale. Mr. Roderick, born in 1795 in Glen Haultin, graduated M.A. of Aberdeen at the age of twenty years. In 1818 he was appointed missionary at Lyndale, whence, in 1823, he was transferred to

Bracadale, on his being presented to that church by MacLeod of MacLeod. During the period of his incumbency in Lyndale, the athletic young minister was a general favourite among those in the higher circles in Skye; and he used to remark, concerning his nomination to Bracadale, that it was more for his proficiency as a marksman, than for his fitness for his calling as minister of the gospel, that he was offered this preferment. In Bracadale he built a church in 1831. We have already referred to his work there, and his continuance of it in Snizort. He was deprived of his charge in 1843, a misfortune that served only to stimulate him to higher endeavour. A man of fearless disposition and herculean strength, he was endowed with marvellous powers of endurance that were often tested to the full. For several years he ministered to his own people in Snizort as well as to those who followed the Free Church in the parish of Portree; and his services were in constant demand in other parts of the island. It has been said of him that, "after passing nights without rest, while journeying by sea and land, he would preach with the greatest vigour." His last illness was brought about by exposure in an open boat during a wet and stormy night, as he was returning from South Uist, where he had been preaching for several days. He was Moderator of the Assembly of the Free Church in the year 1863, and died in 1868. Mr. Roderick was succeeded by the Rev. Joseph Lamont, a man of great amiability and an earnest worker, but lacking the personality of his famous predecessor. He was followed by the Rev. Mr. MacDougall, who had been translated thither from Lochs in Lewis; after him came the present minister, the Rev. Donald MacArthur.

The Established Church, having been rendered vacant by the expulsion of Mr. Roderick in 1843, was filled in the following year by the Rev. Angus Martin.

About the year 1837 the Baptists had established themselves in this parish, attaining such an ascendancy as to curb the Revivalist movement there for a space. The efforts of this sect were, however, effectively counteracted when the Rev. Roderick MacLeod became the minister of the parish in 1838.

On the translation of the Rev. Donald Martin to the Chapel of Ease in Inverness in 1808, the Rev. Donald Ross, a graduate of Aberdeen, was appointed minister of Kilmuir in the following year.

In 1810 a new church was built above the shore of Score Bay, the whole cost being borne by the liberal-minded Alexander, second Lord MacDonald. In 1822 Mr. Ross left Kilmuir for Rogart, and was succeeded by the Rev. Robert MacGregor, whose successor was his scholarly son, Alexander. It was the last who compiled the highly instructive account of this parish for the "New Statistical Account" in 1841. The Rev. Alexander MacGregor had been minister in Inverness prior to his coming to Kilmuir in 1844, and continued to serve the parish until 1851. In 1853 he was succeeded by the Rev. John MacIvor, who had been translated thither from Sleat, where he had officiated for close on ten years. After Mr. MacIvor came the short-lived ministry of Mr. Mackenzie, followed by the long-continued incumbency of the Rev. James Grant. Mr. Grant is reputed to have been a large-minded man, keenly interested in public affairs, while his abilities as an administrator often proved of great help to the local bodies to which he gave his willing service. After him came the scholarly Mr. MacPhail, whose immediate successors were the Rev. Mr. MacLean and the Rev. Mr. Stewart.

It was during the ministry of the Rev. Robert MacGregor that this large parish was divided, a *quoad sacra* charge being constituted at Stenschol by authority of the Assembly in 1833. A minister had been appointed to serve this district in 1829. He was the Rev. John Nicolson, a graduate of the University of Aberdeen, who had previously officiated as missionary in Minginish, whither he had been ordained by the Commission of the Royal Bounty in 1816. The first minister of the Free Church of Kilmuir was the Rev. Christopher Munro, who, in 1864, was translated to Tobermory. His successor, the Rev. J. S. MacPhail, who had previously served in Sleat, went to Kilmuir in 1873, continuing there until the year 1888, when the present incumbent, the Rev. D. A. MacDonald, was appointed to the charge.

In Duirinish, the scholarly William Bethune was succeeded, in 1811, by the saintly John Shaw, who was translated to Bracadale in 1813. After the church had been vacant for a year, it was filled by the Rev. James Suter, a graduate in Arts of Aberdeen, who, in addition to his ministerial duties, was tacksman of Feorling, as well as chamberlain to MacLeod of MacLeod. It was during his ministry that a new church was built in Dunvegan in 1832. Mr.

Suter died in 1839, and his assistant, the Rev. John Glass, was appointed his successor. This minister, as we have seen, came under the influence of the new movement in the church; and when, in 1838, he was translated to Bracadale, he continued the work that the Rev. Roderick MacLeod had fostered there. His successor in Duirinish was the Rev. Archibald Clark, the compiler of the New Statistical Account for the parish. In 1842 Mr. Clark was succeeded by the Rev. Angus Martin, whose short ministry of two years terminated when he was translated to the parish of Snizort, on the deposition of Mr. Roderick. The next minister of Duirinish was the Rev. Duncan MacCallum, who continued to officiate there until 1888. After him came the Rev. Mr. MacLean, who was followed by the Rev. Mr. Mackenzie, the last minister of the Establishment in Duirinish.

In the Free Church of this parish the ministers were the eloquent and evangelical Mr. MacColl, on whose translation to the district of Fort Augustus, there came the Rev. Mr. MacRae—"MacRath Mór," large in body and sanguine in endeavour, a man who enjoyed a wide reputation as a healer, especially amongst the adherents of his own sect.

In the same year that the *quoad sacra* charge was formed at Stenschol, another was established in Duirinish, its first minister being the Rev. Roderick Reid, M.A. When, however, the congregation was reduced, owing to defections, in 1843, he was translated to Lewis. Mr. Reid has been described as a "man of moderate principles, and temperate passions." In 1884, the Rev. D. MacCallum was elected to the charge. He was an ardent democrat, and during his ministry he played a prominent part in the crofters' agitation. In 1887 he left Skye for the island of Tiree.

In Bracadale, the Rev. John Shaw succeeded the Rev. Dr. Roderick MacLeod in 1813, and on his death, in 1823, the Rev. Roderick MacLeod was translated thither from Lyndale. In 1838 the Rev. John Glass became minister of this parish, and on his dismissal in 1843 because of his adherence to the Free Church, the Rev. Neil Mackinnon was appointed parish minister. In 1856 there came the Rev. John Tolmie, who, eight years later, was succeeded by the Rev. Roderick Morrison.

The first minister of the Free Church in Bracadale was the Rev. James Ross, who, for some time previously, had been a teacher in Kilmuir, where he was converted to the new faith.

The Episcopalian chapel at Caroy was restored in 1838, and its minister was the Rev. William Greig, whose congregation then consisted of four families.

In the parish of Strath there was the illustrious succession of MacKinnons. At the beginning of the century the Rev. Donald MacKinnon was minister of this parish, being in 1826 succeeded by his son, John, who had served in the parish of Sleat since 1812. The Rev. John MacKinnon compiled the Statistical Account for his parish in 1841. In 1840 the congregation ceased to meet for worship in the old church of Kilchrist, or Kilchro, "owing to its state of disrepair," and a new church was then erected in Broadford. In 1856 the Rev. John MacKinnon was succeeded by his son, the Rev. Dr. Donald MacKinnon, a man of eminent ability, a fearless protagonist of the evicted crofters of Skye, and a real friend to those in distress.

On the translation of the Rev. John MacKinnon from Sleat in 1826, the Rev. Alexander MacIvor, M.A., who had served for some years as schoolmaster in Glenelg, where his father was minister, became the new incumbent. When the latter went to Dornoch in 1843, his brother, the Rev. John MacIvor, became minister of the parish. Mr. John was a man of gigantic physique, large in heart as well as in body, and he is still remembered for his lovable nature and his great liberality. On his translation to the parish of Kilmuir in 1853, there came the following succession:—The Rev. John Forbes, who ministered there for ten years; the Rev. Donald MacDonald; and, seven years afterwards, the Rev. Archibald MacNeil. In 1882 the Rev. Alexander Cameron was inducted here, being succeeded in 1914 by the present minister, the Rev. Mr. Ross.

It would appear that the old church of Kilmore, built in 1681, was still used for worship in 1841. The parish manse was erected in 1815, the same year as the Castle of Armadale, the plan of which, by Gillespie Graham, was used in the designing of the manse.

The first minister of the Free Church in the parish of Sleat was the Rev. J. S. MacPhail; and he continued to officiate there for the long period of twenty years, after which he was transferred to Kilmuir. His most notable successor was the Rev. Finlay Graham, who was a zealous advocate of the cause of the crofters during the early eighties of last century.

About the year 1890, the Free Church began to exhibit signs of schism, when the proposal for union with the United Presbyterian Church was being mooted. On the passing of the Declaratory Act in 1892, the indications of cleavage took definite form, with the result that a new church was set up. It was called the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, and its leaders were the Rev. Donald MacFarlane of Raasay and the Rev. Donald MacDonald of Shieldaig. In certain parts of Skye, notably in the parishes of Portree and Duirinish, this new sect had a large following.

THE MORALS OF THE PEOPLE.

As a result of the revivals that took place in many parts of Skye in the early years of the nineteenth century, two facts emerge. In the first place, the preachers of the new evangelism waged war persistently against such popular recreations as secular music, the ancient tales, and the traditional barderie, with the result that much of the native culture, developed during the course of ages, has been irretrievably lost.

In the second place, there supervened a decided change in the conduct of the people, so far as their attitude to temperance was concerned. Thus the Rev. A. Clark of Duirinish, writing in 1841, says, in effect, that at marriages and funerals the riotous revelries that prevailed in previous years were then unknown; and he continues: "The people are generally remarkably sober. Their hospitality continues as unbounded as ever; but in their exercise of it, the rules of temperance and decorum are very rarely violated, and every excess is condemned and discouraged"; and the Rev. Coll MacDonald of Portree declares that such vices as profane swearing and drunkenness "are less prevalent than they were twenty years ago."

Still, a large amount of strong drink was then consumed in Skye. In Bracadale alone there were, according to the Rev. Roderick MacLeod, five licensed ale houses; and he adds: "Whisky is retailed in various other places, to the manifest injury of the temporal interests of the people, and the progressive and sure destruction of their morals." Mr Roderick was, of course, one of the stoutest advocates of temperance the Church then possessed, and it was characteristic of the man to denounce, in no unmistakable terms, any extension of the traffic in excisable liquors. The distillery in Carbost of Minginish had been established in the year 1820, and its presence was a decided offence to the principles of this ardent reformer. In referring to it on one occasion, he characterises it as "one of the greatest curses that, in the ordinary course of providence, could befal this or any other place."

On the whole, the standard of morality that prevailed among the people was a high one. They were peaceable and law-abiding; so much so, indeed, that it is very rare to find an instance of recorded crime.

Stanhope, who made a tour of Skye in 1805, adverts to the jail that had "recently" been built at Portree; and his observation on it is, "it is principally *in terrorem*, as it is always empty." The Rev. A. MacIvor, writing in 1841, states that the only criminal offence known to have been committed in the parish of Sleat since the year 1827 was one of theft, "and the culprit was an imbecile"; while the Rev. John MacKinnon, writing at the same time of Strath, has nothing worse to record of the conduct of his parishioners than to deplore the importation by gangrel-bodies of ragmen, tinkers, and egg-wives, of such vices as "tea-drinking, tobacco-chewing, and smoking"! Of the parish of Portree, the Rev. Coll MacDonald says: "The people are powerfully under the influence of moral principles, so much so that heinous crimes are seldom or ever seen or heard among them."

In the parish of Snizort, on the other hand, Mr. Donald Fraser, the compiler of the "Statistical Account," remarks on the degeneracy of morals among the people, their proneness to quarrel, their litigious propensities, and their disposition to thieving. This is truly a staggering statement when collated with the contemporary accounts of the other parishes, and one that can be accepted only with a large amount of reservation. Indeed, the only facts that can at all be adduced in support of this sweeping asseveration is a statement by the minister of the parish of Portree to the effect that, in 1840 (a year when a phenomenal wave of crime overtook the island), as many as sixteen persons had been sentenced to imprisonment at Portree, "four of them for housebreaking." He adds that, owing to the insecurity of their confines, the prisoners often escaped, and that they were made desperate by the inhumanity of their treatment. No attempt was made to heat the cells, no bedding was provided for them, and the means of subsistence were so scanty that they were often starving.

The Housing of the People.

The housing of the people showed no improvement on the conditions prevailing during the previous century. In the vast majority of cases, the cattle were under the same roof as the people themselves. The dwellings were still the same long, low-roofed structures, and rarely was there any attempt made to divide them into chambers. Where partitions did exist, these were chiefly of drystone; some were of wattled-work, woven of straw or reeds; while, owing to the great dearth of timber, there were very few of wood. They seldom reached higher than the top of the walls of the house; above that was black emptiness, permeated by the peat reek that fumigated and deodorised the noisome atmosphere.

Near the fire, which was in the middle of the floor, was a cast-iron pot of enormous capacity, containing dyeing decoctions, whose pungent odours drew attention to its presence in every household with any pretensions to skill and well-regulated industry.

There was, of course, no incentive to change these conditions. Indeed, should the tenant aim at improving the amenities of his house or his holding, there was often imposed an increase of rent as a result of his labours. Besides, people were prohibited in most parishes from gleaning thatch for their dwellings, as the cutting of rushes, and especially the pulling of heather, were held to interfere with the preservation of game. Thus a crofter from Sconser, who had been cited to appear before the Royal Commission in 1882, declared that the houses in his district were the worst in Skye, because the people were not allowed to take thatch from the hills. "A neighbour of mine," he added, "went out to cut heather for ropes, and the huntsmen came upon him, and they threatened to shoot him if they found him there again. They were afraid we would disturb the muirfowl." A witness from Milovaig in Glendale, who came before the same court, deponed that, owing to the prohibition in vogue in his district against the pulling of heather, the condition of their dwelling-houses was "most deplorable." And the same sad state of affairs is epitomised in the "Report of the Commission," wherein it is declared that "the habitations of the people are of a character that would imply physical and moral degradation in the eyes of those who do not know how much decency, courtesy, virtue, and even mental refinement, survive amid the sordid surroundings of a Highland hovel."

In the latter portion of the nineteenth century, wooden partitions were erected in some houses, and separate doors were made for the cattle and the human inmates. At the same time, a few sought to effect internal improvements by improvising a sort of wooden chimney that was suspended against the end wall of the kitchen; but this contrivance proved, in most cases, to be a very ineffectual ventilator. Many outhouses also were constructed, and soon a few of the so-called "white houses" began to make their appearance in the more progressive areas. But it was not until the following century was on its way that their number came to exceed that of the old "black houses."

THE GENERAL CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE: THEIR DIET, CLOTHING, ETC.

During this century the people came, more and more, to depend on the potato as their principal article of food. The enormous increase in its cultivation is shown by the fact that, whereas in one parish of Skye the yield was 5,000 barrels in 1801, it had risen to 32,000 barrels in 1841. We have seen that great privations resulted from a failure of this crop, even towards the end of the previous century, when people were less dependent on it than they were at this time. The inclement weather that prevailed in 1807, and again in 1817, greatly impaired the crop, and there was much suffering in Skye; but worse times were to follow. In the summer of 1835 the weather had been so wet that a blight supervened which ruined the potato fields. During that winter, and the spring of the following year, many were in a state bordering on starvation; and for several years afterwards their plight had not much improved. It has been said that, in 1837, "half the people of Skye were destitute." The Rev. Roderick MacLeod, who wrote the "Statistical Account" for Bracadale in 1841, in speaking of the food of the people, reports: "They are not considered ill-provided who can feed on potatoes and salt; and during the last season even that would have been a luxury to many of them." The dependence of the people on the potato crop is adverted to by those other ministers in Skye who were responsible for the compilation of the "Statistical Account" for their respective parishes at this time. The Rev. A. MacIvor of Sleat says: "The food of the people consists chiefly of potatoes and fish, sometimes with salt and sometimes without. Alluding to the conditions that obtained in the parish of Duirinish, the Rev. A. Clerk declares: "Butcher meat is almost unknown among them, and very little meal is used"; while it would appear that in the district of Portree the people did not fare any better. The minister of that parish, the Rev. Coll MacDonald, states that "no people on earth live on more simple and scanty diet than those in this parish. The greater number of them subsist on potatoes of the worst kind, sometimes with, but oftener without, fish." A medical man who spent a couple of years in Raasay about 1850, remarks: "The prevailing disease is poverty, and the remedy is food."

The distresses of these years were not so general, nor so acute as they became after 1845. That year, and during the three succeeding summers, the blight played havoc with the crops, so that in many cases the people were not able to raise enough potatoes to provide seed for planting in the following spring. Destitution was so widespread that the government appealed for funds for the alleviation of distress; and employment was given in the construction of new roads and the repairing of those already existing.

In 1848 a Committee of Relief was inaugurated for the West Highlands, and a Captain Eliott was appointed Inspector-General for the whole area. Writing in August of that year, he reports that "the potato failure in Skye is virulent, decided, and on the increase. The cereal crops are perhaps an average, and from the wet weather they are still growing, and they afford no prospect of harvest under five or six weeks to come."

The local agent of the Committee was Captain Fishbourne, a man entirely devoid of sympathy with the people. He constantly inveighs against them for what he considers their lack of self-dependence, and their proneness to look for help from others without doing anything in return. In substantiation of his statement, he cites the case of thirty-five men who, as he alleges, left the employment of MacLeod, although they were earning 10s a week, "merely on the speculation that they would obtain Committee meal." The people, however, complained that while they worked hard, and for long hours, the wages were low; and Captain Fishbourne himself mentions the case of a man who, with his wife and family, had worked at netmaking from Monday morning till Saturday night for the aggregate wage of 4s 8d.

The work provided consisted of road-making, the construction of piers, the building of march dykes, draining land, spinning, knitting, and netting. Of these employments, road-making absorbed 1441.

Philanthropic agencies, also, were busy; but none was so unsparing of his means and his energy in that respect as Norman, twenty-second Chief of MacLeod. That generosity which had graced the House of Dunvegan down the years, was never practised with greater liberality and genuine disinterestedness than on this occasion. It is said that the estate was spending from £175 to £225 a week; and when the chief was warned of the imminence of financial disaster, he would answer that "ruin must be faced rather than let the people die."

Godfrey, Lord MacDonald, too, was tireless in his efforts to relieve the distress; and it is on record that, in 1849, he was supplying numerous families with meal free of charge. Still, there was no alleviation of the suffering; and many were constrained, as on previous occasions of want, to haunt the foreshores for shellfish, that with dulse-"kail" was often their sole means of subsistence for weeks on end. So great was the state of destitution that, in 1850, the Rev. Roderick MacLeod, minister of the Free Church at Snizort, wrote to the Secretary of State for Home Affairs: "Death from starvation must be the inevitable result if we are denied extraneous aid, as we have no available local resources of any kind."

The state of poverty that prevailed during the first portion of this century is shown also by the lack of the other amenities of life. Great difficulty was experienced in providing clothing, many going bare-footed even in winter. Some were constrained to make use of meal bags as outer garments, and more often as underclothing, for children. The Rev. Coll MacDonald reports of his own parish in 1841: "The people have little of night or day clothing. The children nearly approach absolute nakedness"; and the Rev. Roderick MacLeod ascertained that, in the parish of Bracadale, "one hundred and forty families had no change in night or day clothes."

THE CLEARANCES AND EMIGRATION.

We have seen that the trade-boom in the sale of the black cattle had been maintained without intermittence until the beginning of the nineteenth century, and that one of the immediate results of it was a steady appreciation in the price of such land as could conveniently be used for the purposes of pasturage. Incidentally, it created a keen demand for more land on the part of those who could afford to pay extra rent; so that several of the smaller farmers, and large numbers of crofters, were callously squeezed out. The system of multiple farming, too, was in vogue—a principle characterised by the Rev. Roderick MacLeod of Bracadale as "a decided disadvantage to the whole population."

Reference has also been made to a new industry, namely, kelp-making, that was then introduced, and was to provide a means of subsistence for a time for those who were dispossessed. Such people built lowly homes along the shores, and were able to live in moderate comfort so long as the price of kelp was maintained at the higher level. When, however, in 1825, the tax on barilla was repealed, and a start was made in utilising for commercial purposes the enormous deposits of sulphate of potash at Strassfurt in Germany, a rapid decrease in the demand for Hebridean kelp ensued, so that in the short space of a little more than a year its price fell from £30 to £2 10s a ton. So long as the industry of kelp-making was lucrative, fishing, and even farming, were to a large extent neglected: when it was no longer profitable to pursue it, the spectre of starvation haunted all who had no other means of support. The exodus to the Colonies was once more resumed, and many a home-sick heart was divided from the Misty Isle "by a waste of seas."

About the same time that the trade in kelp was on the decline, an event happened that was destined to play a greater part in the depopulation of our island than any that had preceded it. That was the accidental discovery that the Cheviot breed of sheep could withstand the rigours of a Highland winter. A feverish demand for sheep farms, in consequence, ensued; and factors were busy devising plans for getting rid of the crofters who occupied the more fertile townships. Whole communities were soon cleared out of certain districts, and places that once rang with the merry voices of children were now converted into deserts, where nothing could be heard but the bleat of the polled sheep of the borders, the bark of the collie, and the language of the stranger; for several wealthy farmers from the Scottish mainland entered into possession of tacks in Skye.

In his "Oran nan Ciobairean," the poet, Allan Dall, depicts the situation in a graphic manner:

"Thainig oirnn do Albainn crois,
Tha daoine bochda nochdte ris,
Gun bhiadh, gun aodach, gun chluain,
Tha 'n àirde tuath an déidh a sgrios.
Cha'n fhaicear ach caoirich is uain,
Goill mu'n cuairt dhaibh air gach slios,
Tha gach fearann air dol fàs,
Na Gaidheil is an ceann fo fhliodh.

"Cha chluinnear geum ann am buaile,
Chaidh 'n crodh guail'-fhionn a suim,
Cha 'n eisdear luinneag, no duanag,
Bleoghan mairt aig gruagach dhuinn
Bho'n chaidh ar cuallach an tainead
'S tric tha pathadh 'gar claoidh;
'N aite nan càirdean a bh' againn,
Linnseach ghlas am bun gach tuim."

The work of depopulating the straths of Skye went on apace. The grassy slopes on the west side of the island being considered to be eminently suitable for the rearing of Cheviots, clearances on a wholesale scale were there effected. From Duirinish, Bracadale, and Minginish people were evicted. The population of Bracadale in 1841 was 1824. By 1881 it had dropped to 929. The whole of the land in this fertile area was divided among six tenant farmers, namely, Talisker, Glenbrittle, Drynoch, Ebost with Ullinish, Ose, and Totarder. Glenbrittle, which was occupied by crofters in fairly comfortable circumstances, was now converted into a sheep-run. The flats and the slopes of Eynort, and of Tuasdale, two of the most picturesque spots in Skye, bear the records of the clearances in unmistakable characters even to this day. A large community was driven off the former, and the manse was converted into a shepherd's cottage; from the latter about a dozen families were cleared away. Sixteen families were expelled from the adjoining lands of Krakinish, and as many as thirty were forced to evacuate Fernilea. All these took place in Minginish; but a similar tale could be told of Bracadale, from one district of which, namely, Feorlig, seventeen families were removed in 1840.

And Trotarnish did not escape. The populous district of Scorrybreck was cleared from end to end. The fertile south end of Raasay suffered a similar fate, and numerous townships there were wholly given over to the rearing of sheep. Indeed, few districts escaped the effects of the change. The work of devastation was carried into Strath, where, among other districts, two populous townships, Borreraig and Suisnish, were ruthlessly cleared by the notorious Ballingall, Lord MacDonald's factor. This was in 1852; and, as some of the crofters offered resistance, they were forcibly evicted, their dwellings being razed to the ground in order to prevent their return. It was a time of snow, and one man, who did return to his home in Suishnish, was found dead the following morning at the door of his ruined house, having perished in the night from exposure and cold. It has been said that as many as 2000 were dispossessed of land and home on the estate of MacLeod, and that the number for the whole island amounted to 3500 persons.

The evicted were in some cases provided with alternative accommodation; but invariably on those parts of the estate where the soil was inferior or exhausted. Hundreds were intruded on the crofting areas, where extreme overcrowding, with all its attendant evils, soon prevailed. A few instances will suffice to show the extent to which this congestion had been allowed to go. Two of the townships of Braes, namely, Penichorran and Achnahanaid, were divided among five and four tenants, respectively, about the year 1823. By 1883 the number of crofters had been increased to twenty-six in the former, and in the latter to seventeen, exclusive of several squatters.

Multitudes more could find no site for a home in the land of their birth, and the only course open to them lay in emigration to the Colonies. In 1837 a contingent of 459 was shipped off to Australia; and during the years 1840 and 1841 as many as 600 souls sailed to that continent and to America from the parish of Portree alone. Indeed, emigration was considered to be the only expedient for relieving the difficulties of the situation, and many philanthropically-minded people formed associations for the purpose of raising funds in order to help those who might be induced to go abroad. By many the action of these agencies was thought to be a most commendable one, most of the ministers of Skye giving it their blessing. The Rev. Coll MacDonald of Portree was enthusiastic in his praise. "It cannot fail," he wrote in 1841, "to afford the highest satisfaction to every well-regulated mind to see the efforts now made by noble men, proprietors, and others connected with the Highlands of Scotland, for transferring the poor and labouring classes of the community to the British colonies. . . . The highest praise is due to Lord MacDonald for his liberality in this beneficent work and patriotic enterprise, he having expended large sums of money, both this year and last, in conveying the poor people on his property to America." In 1851 a society, under the presidency of Sheriff Fraser of Portree, succeeded in securing £7200, by means of which it was able to provide for the passage of 200 emigrants from Skye; while in 1854, 129 persons sailed from Raasay in one day, when, it is said, the wailing of these unfortunate people could plainly be heard on the opposite shore at Braes as they were being dragged on board the emigrant ship in Clachan Bay.

Mention has already been made of the removal of the crofters from Borreraig and from Suisnish in Strath, and it is interesting to record the account given of the incident by Sir Archibald Geikie, the famous geologist, as it represents the impressions of one who was an eye-witness of the event, and is noted for the accuracy of his observations and the impartiality of his statements.

Geikie was always a welcome guest at the manse of the MacKinnons in Kilbride, and concerning one of his many visits there he writes: "One of the most vivid recollections I retain of Kilbride is that of the eviction, or the clearance of the crofters of Suisnish. The corner of Strath between the two sea-inlets of Lochs Slapin and Eishort had been for ages occupied by a community that cultivated the lower ground, where their huts formed a kind of scattered village. The land belonged to the wide domain of Lord MacDonald, whose affairs were in such a state that he had to place himself in the hands of trustees. These men had little local knowledge of the estate; and though they doubtless administered it to the best of their ability, their main object was to make as much money as possible out of the rents, so as, on the one hand, to satisfy the creditors, and, on the other, to hasten the time when the proprietor might be able to resume possession. The interests of the crofters formed a very secondary consideration. With these aims, the trustees determined to clear out the whole population of Suisnish, and convert the ground into one large sheep farm, to be placed in the hands of a responsible grazier, if possible from the south country.

"I had heard some rumours of these intentions, but did not realise they were in process of being carried into effect until one afternoon, as I was returning from my ramble, a strange wailing sound reached my ears at intervals on the breeze from the west. On gaining the top of a hill on the south side of the valley, I could see a long and motley procession wending along the road that led from Suisnish. It halted at the point in the road opposite Kilbride, and there the lamentation became long and loud.

"As I drew nearer, I could see that the minister, with his wife and daughters, had come out to meet the people, and bid them all farewell. It was a miscellaneous gathering of at least three generations of crofters. There were old men and women, too feeble to walk, who were placed in carts, the younger members of the community on foot were carrying their bundles of clothes and household effects, while the children, with looks of alarm, walked alongside.

"There was a pause in the notes of woe as the last words were exchanged with the family of Kilbride. Every one was in tears; each wished to clasp the hands that had so often befriended them; and it seemed as if they could not tear themselves away. When they set off once more, a cry of grief went up to heaven; the long plaintive wail, like a funeral coronach, was resumed; and, after the last of the emigrants had disappeared behind the hill, the sound seemed to re-echo through the whole wide valley of Strath in one prolonged note of desolation. The people were on their way to be shipped to Canada. I have often wandered since then over the solitary ground of Suisnish. Not a soul is to be seen there now; but the greener patches of field, and the crumbling walls, mark where an active and happy community once lived."

Incidents such as this drew from our island bard, Neil MacLeod, many of his most affecting poems; and what a close parallel to the account we have quoted is given in his "Cumha Eilein a' Cheò"!

> "Ach tha 'n comunn air sgaoileadh,
> 'S iad air faondradh 's gach àit'
> 'S cha tachair sinn comhlà,
> Air Di Dòmhnaich mar bhà.
> Aitean còmhnuidh ar n-òige,
> Air an còmhdach fo'n làr;
> Far 'n do shaothraich ar sinnsir,
> Iomadh linn agus àl."

The lot of the emigrants was always a hard one; and for several years they were condemned to terrible privations in the land of their adoption. Writing in "The Celtic Monthly" in 1879, Alexander Mackenzie, who had done so much on behalf of the dispossessed crofter of the Highlands, says: "Fathers, mothers, and children bound themselves away as virtual slaves in some settlements for a mere subsistence. Some lived in huts with only bushes as roof, and had to walk some eighty miles through deep snow, and through trackless forests, in order to obtain a few bushels of potatoes, or a little flour, in exchange for their labour, dragging the commodities back on their backs. Some boiled buds of birch as food for their children; and in one case a small supply of seed potatoes, brought a long distance, and planted, was taken up and the splits eaten."

But the wicked work of eviction went relentlessly on. The veriest pretext was often considered sufficient justification for turning a whole community adrift. When Lord MacDonald's factor, Ballingall, wished to extend the deer forest of Sconser, in 1853, two families of crofters and seven of cottars were cleared off Aricharnach, eight from Moll, and sixteen crofters, in addition to several squatters, were removed from Ceann nan Creagan and Tormicheag; and we have seen that, several years previously, the people of Coillemhor were deprived of their hill grazing, and none was allowed to possess sheep. The crofts of the people of Sconser were not protected from the deer, so that the crops were destroyed year after year; and yet such was the fear of eviction that no one dared to raise his voice in protest. A general policy was also pursued of still further curtailing the common pastures of crofting townships for the benefit of the adjoining sheep farmer. The grazing of Ben Lee had thus been filched from the crofters of Braes, and let to a tenant in 1865; and this practice had been continued so long, although no abatement in rent was vouchsafed those dispossessed, that a spirit of revolt was beginning slowly to simmer in the minds of the people of Skye.

The year 1875 marked the commencement of a period of prosperity in the fishing industry off the West Coast of Ireland. Multitudes of our islesmen hired themselves as crews in the fishing-boats of Campbeltown and Carradale; and good wages were earned. As a result of the comparative comfort they thus enjoyed, young men spent the winters at home, where the local fishing was prosecuted with moderate success. Early marriages were the rule. New settlements were clamantly needed; but, instead of meeting this demand, people were still being extruded on all sides. The experience they had gained from home was, however, beginning to have its effect on the minds of the young men of the island; so that they were now no longer disposed to suffer tamely every injustice that might be heaped upon them by those in authority. They began to question the justice of rack-renting, and the insidious practice of preying on the common pastures of the townships. Resentment at the grievances under which they laboured was gradually growing in intensity. It had found expression in Staffin; in Glendale it had assumed alarming proportions. There the crofters had left their stock on Waterstein in defiance of an interdict, and three of the leaders were arrested, tried, and committed to prison for a period of two months.

In the district of Braes a crisis was approaching. The grazing of Ben Lee was due to run out of lease in 1882, and the crofters of the three southern townships were negotiating for its restoration to themselves. Time and again they declared their willingness to pay, in the aggregate, a higher rent than that paid by the "sitting" tenant; but their plea went unheeded.

When redress was denied them, they took matters into their own hands. They allowed their sheep to stray over the whole range of the mountain, and some went so far as to refuse to pay rent until their claims should be recognised.

Certain men amongst the agitating crofters were marked out for punishment. In order to have them evicted from their holdings, the Sheriff's officer in Portree, with two assistants, went to the

Braes to serve notices of ejectment. The officials were met on the way to Braes by the women and children, who forced them to burn the documents on the public highway, in addition to heaping other indignities upon them.

This glaring act of deforcement raised the ire of the chief legal authority for Inverness-shire, the notorious Sheriff Ivory, and he determined to crush this spirit of lawlessness by the use of stern measures.

He asked the Chief Constable of Glasgow to send fifty policement to Skye in order to meet an emergency; and the requisition was so peremptory that, it is said, the men were despatched without the sanction, or even the cognisance, of the magistrates of the city.

The Braes folk knew well that their action in interfering with the Sheriff's Officer would be viewed with severity by those in authority, and they were informed of the intention to have summons served on them again, and this time with the assistance of a strong body of policemen. Watchers took turns on prominent positions, and a rude system of telegraphing was agreed upon, whereby intelligence could be brought to the people immediately the police and the officers of the law had left their headquarters in Portree. Owing to the fact that the period had expired during which summons for eviction could legally be served, the vigilance of the sentries had abated, with the result that the inhabitants of Upper Braes were taken by surprise when, at 6 o'clock on the morning of the 17th April, 1882, a force of fifty Glasgow constables and ten local policemen, with two sheriffs and their officers, reached the northern boundary of Gedintailor before they were observed. At the opposite march of that township the invading force was met by a hurriedly summoned body of the people of Balmeanach and Penichorran, about one hundred strong, many of them dishevelled and in a state of deshabille; for news of the invasion had come to most of them whilst they were still in bed. Disappointment was written large on every countenance; for all were aggrieved that the policemen had been permitted to penetrate so far into their territory without opposition; and in the heavy rain that was falling, the kindly old folk, as they stood there trembling on their staffs, presented a pitiable sight. It must here be added that most of the able-bodied men of the district had already left home for the Irish fishing, and that if they had been present that day a situation fraught with alarming consequences would have developed.

As it was, matters soon assumed an ugly aspect; for no sooner had certain men been arrested, and a start made by the police to return, than, at the instigation of the women, a general attack was launched against the expeditionary force. Sticks and flails were wielded with telling effect, and volleys of stones were hurled with unerring aim. The road goes through a narrow gorge at a place called Allt nan Gobhlag, and there the police were assailed on both flanks with relentless vigour. The order was now given by Captain Donald, of the Glasgow detachment, to charge the attackers, who, however, did not yield an inch. The party in charge of the prisoners, together with the law officers, had meantime passed through the narrow defile, and, seeing this, the rearguard of the force rushed through "at the double." But the worst was yet to come. About 300 yards to the north, the road is cut along the face of a steep declivity, which rises almost sheer from the sea to a height of about 400 feet. The place is called "An Cumhang," the crofters' "Torres Vedras," where they confidently believed they could stop the progress of any force that might be sent against them, and where, for days previously, they had been busy gathering boulders, which they heaped in readiness for the fray on the brow of the hill.

A race for this strategic point now started in deadly earnest, and a small body of the natives having secured it first, they began to make good use of their post of vantage. An avalanche of boulders was sent hurtling down the precipitous slope, so that several of the policemen were grievously injured. For a few brief moments the police were brought to a standstill. Move, however, they must; for to halt in such a position would be tantamount to suicide, now that the numbers on the hill were rapidly increasing. A desperate rush was therefore made by the policemen, and they succeeded in forcing a way through.

Having now gained the more open ground, the constables, who had hitherto used their batons only, began to retaliate with stones also; and the crofters, incensed to fury for having lost their position, closed with the police in grim hand-to-hand strife. Many heads were bruised, and the marvel is that all escaped with their lives. The women fought like Amazons, and several of them were severely mauled, one old woman being in a critical condition for several days after the fight. As the road now lay through open country, the crofters withdrew from the conflict.

The prisoners, Alexander Finlayson, Malcolm Finlayson, Peter MacDonald, Donald Nicolson, and James Nicolson, were lodged in the prison at Portree, pending their removal for trial to Inverness. There they were convicted, and sentenced to pay fines. These fines were soon subscribed by sympathisers, and the men returned home the day following their trial. By some they were looked upon as heroes; by others as martyrs, who were being persecuted under a ruthless system. The whole island was seething with discontent. Warships were sent to the lochs of Skye; troops were despatched ashore, and marched through the disaffected areas in order to overawe the people. Wiser counsellors, however, advised an impartial inquiry into the condition of the crofters; and a Royal Commission was set up by the government of Mr. Gladstone in 1883. It was composed of six members, four of whom were landlords, namely the chairman, Lord Napier, Mackenzie of Gairloch, Cameron of Lochiel, and Fraser Macintosh, and only two who had no direct interest in the land, Professor MacKinnon and Sheriff Nicolson. This Commission gave of its time unstintingly, and by the end of a year it had issued its report, after having accumulated an enormous mass of evidence. Soon the public came to know of the scandalous extent to which rack-renting had been carried on, and the unrighteous methods that were practised to deprive a defenceless and unsophisticated peasantry of the land which had been occupied by their families for many generations. "Notwithstanding the studied caution of the language," says Mr. MacFarlane, a member of Parliament of that time, "the report discloses a state of misery, of wrong doing, and of patient long-suffering without a parallel in the history of our country."

The immediate consequence of the work of the Commission was the passing of the Crofters' Holdings Act in 1886, when, among other privileges, the provisions of fair rent and security of tenure were vouchsafed the smallholder. Commissioners were appointed to fix an equitable rental; and it was then that the glaring height to which the rapacity of landed proprietors and their factors had arisen was brought to light. Thus, the Commissions assessed one croft in Braes at a rental of £3 10s, whereas its tenant had been paying £11 10s for several years previously. In the townships of Balmeanach and Gedintailor the average reduction of rent amounted to 50 per cent.; whilst the arrears accounted against crofters in the same district were written off to the extent of 70 per cent.

The benefits that flowed from the Crofters' Holdings Act can best be appreciated when we consider the conditions under which the crofter laboured before it received legislative enactment. Owing to the keen demand that existed for land, no compunction was shown by factors to any who might, for the time being, find it difficult to pay his rent. He was peremptorily ejected from his home, and his holding was conferred on the highest bidder. It was easy to obtain offerers, for, despite the drain of emigration, the population was increasing, and those who had already been dispossessed were eager to resume occupancy of a plot of ground at any price. The ingoing tenant was obliged to hold himself responsible for the payment of any arrears that might have been incurred by his predecessor, with the result that many a poor, though industrious family was destined to suffer extreme want for many years, in order to meet the heavy obligations that were imposed upon them. But so strong was the love of the homeland in the hearts of these people that they would submit to any conditions rather than jeopardise the continuance of their tenure.

It is difficult for us to understand the mentality of a people that would permit the exercise of such tyranny with impunity; and, in our thoughtless moments, we are prone to accuse them of slavish subservience to lairds and their factors. But the traditional reverence for the chief still persisted among them; and their implicit faith in the principle of "what is, is right," led them to endure their cruel lot uncomplainingly, and impute it wholly to the will of an All-wise Providence.

Hence it happened that regulations imposed on them by tacksmen or factors received their unquestioning obedience. When necessity compelled them to take heather, rushes, or seaware, from the lands of neighbouring farmers, they met the claims of the latter for compensation by rendering personal service. When their common grazing was curtailed for the benefit of the adjacent farmer, they submitted without demur. When deer destroyed their crops, they raised no protest, lest they should incur the illwill of the factor. A witness from Sconser, before the Royal Commission of 1883, declared: "We dare not kill the deer which come to our crofts for fear of eviction"; while another from Torrin deponed that, in his township, they suffered much loss from the incursions of deer; and he adds: "I was paying five shillings of dog tax to enable me to keep deer off my ground. The shooting-tenant's gamekeeper came to the back of my house and shot my dog fifty yards off. The dog was lying beside my wife and daughter, who were lifting potatoes at the time. I complained to the fiscal, who, however, averred I had no right to keep a dog." Instances of tyrannous actions of this nature could be multiplied indefinitely; but enough has been written to show what cruel wrongs were inflicted on a defenceless and law-abiding people.

The land agitation, and its concomitant incidents, powerfully affected the imagination of the people, and many gave vent to their feelings in song. Chief among the bards who were moved by the stirring events of those times were Neil MacLeod, Mary MacPherson (Màiri ni'n Iain Bhàin), Donald MacCallum, and Neil MacPherson (Nial Ceannaiche). In his "Oran nan Croitearain Sgiathanach," the first of these raises a sympathetic note:

"An sluagh bha cho càirdeil,
Cho suairc', 's cho bàidheil,
Rinn uachdarain stràiceil
Am fàsgadh ro theann.
Tha saors' air am fàgail,
Tha 'n raointean 'nam fàsaich',
'S tha caoraich an àite
Nan àrmunn 's a' ghleann."

CONGESTION, COTTARS.

By the year 1811, the runrig system of tenure had come to an end in Skye. Thereafter the land was divided into crofts; and, owing to the circumscribed areas under cultivation, and especially the small amount of souming each lot was allowed to carry, these portions were often insufficient to support a family even in a favourable year. The margin of comfort could never be large under the circumstances, and the condition of the occupiers was worsened by the extraneous demands made upon them. On account of the great increase in the population, many squatters settled on the new holdings, so that it often happened, according to the Rev. Coll MacDonald of Portree, that as many as three families occupied one plot of ground.

The evil of congestion was so accentuated during the time of the clearances, that by 1840 a grievous state of affairs prevailed all over Skye. Thus the Rev. A. MacGregor says of Kilmuir that, while there were only 190 divisions of land, there were as many as 421 families in the parish; and the Rev. A. MacIvor declares that as many as 225 families then paid no rent in his own parish of Sleat. These cottars built a house on the holding of a relative, or at the margin of the high-water mark by the shore, and were given a small portion of land, that could ill be spared by the recognised occupier, so that they might raise a crop of potatoes. In the "Report of the Board for the Relief of Highland Destitution," issued in 1850, there is abundant evidence of overcrowding in the parishes of Skye. Thus one district, of the extent of 3676 acres, was allocated among 334 families of crofters, while it maintained a parasitic population of 1200 souls. In another, an extent of 205 acres over all was occupied by nine tenants. They cultivated 42 acres, which, in a good year, produced 61 bolls of oats. Their stock comprised 24 cows, 16 sheep, and 6 horses, and they paid £84 in rent; and here were ten families of cottars. A third extended to 161 acres, of which only 22 were under cultivation, and it was divided among four tenants, each of whom could raise about 8 bolls of oats. They had each 2 cows, 5 sheep, and a horse, and on their land lived 11 families of squatters, who were parasitic on the rent-paying tenants.

AGRICULTURE.

On the larger farms the cumbersome old wooden plough had been discarded in the early years of the nineteenth century; but it continued to be used by certain of the smaller tenants, a number of whom shared one among them. In most cases it was manufactured locally, and it cost about £2 15s. It ceased to be used after 1820.

The crooked spade was still the implement responsible for the tillage of what was by far the greater portion of the arable land;

for, owing to the weight of the old-fashioned plough, which required four horses to pull it, a "pan" was formed in the soil, and this interfered with the free movement of moisture to and from the surface.

On account of the fact that no attention was paid to suitable methods of drainage, the ridge system of cultivation, "Feannagan Taomaidh," described in previous pages, was still the vogue. This was the invariable practice in the rearing of potatoes, which were then the principal crop of the island. The increase in its cultivation was enormous; for, as already shown, whereas the quantity raised at the beginning of the century in one parish of Skye was 5,000 barrels, as many as 32,000 were grown in 1841.

It is significant that, during the same period, the quantity of oats remained practically static; for while the amount produced in the same parish was 1,600 bolls in the year 1800, it was only 1,618 in 1841.

Among the larger tenant-farmers, a regular system of rotation of crops had been introduced; and, in addition to potatoes and oats, hay, barley, and a small quantity of turnips, were grown; although, according to the Rev. A. Clark, turnips and clover "were utterly unknown" in Duirinish in 1841. All the writers of the time declare that, owing to the unfavourable weather conditions, the hay crop was always greatly impoverished before it could be secured.

The allotments of the crofters were so small that the principle of rotation could not be exercised; so that intensive cultivation of one or two crops was the rule. After some years the soil was thus rendered useless for cultivation, its poverty being accentuated by the lavish use made of seaware for manuring purposes. When the soil was put "out of heart," their only remedy was to leave it fallow sometimes for four and five years, yielding nothing but weeds.

It has already been shown that no incentive was given to the smaller tenants to improve the condition of their holdings. Indeed, if they did make any effort, with a view to their amelioration, they were faced with the possibility of an increase in their rent. This unwise and unjust practice was in vogue all over the island. Writing in 1841, the Rev. A. Clark, minister of Duirinsh, says, in effect, that the crofters were deterred from making any improvements for the reason that they were tenants at will, "and they will not bestow their labour on land which may become another's before the end of the year." Even as late as 1883, we find witnesses before the Royal Commission deploring the fact that, from their own experience and that of their neighbours, they were precluded from effecting improvements on their crofts. Thus one witness declared: "I tried to improve my croft by working it; but my reward was that my rent was raised 5s in the £. I did no more for it. I worked like a horse, going four miles for mud for the soil."

TRADE AND INDUSTRIES.

The trade in the sale of the native black cattle still lingered on; for, even as late as 1840, we find that the annual exportation from the parish of Bracadale alone amounted to 450 head. During the Napoleonic Wars an exorbitant price was secured for this breed, and a brisk trade was then effected. By the middle of the century the sale of sheep had become an important business, though hitherto confined chiefly to Bracadale, from which as many as 4500 were sold yearly. The average prices realised for animals then were as follows:—£7 for a horse, £6 10s for a cow, £1 for a cheviot sheep, and 16s 6d for a blackfaced sheep with lamb.

As already stated, the trade in kelp-making, once so vigorous, began steadily to decline, the several stages in its decay being marked by the importation of barilla from Spain after 1817, the abolition of the salt duty in 1825, and especially the discovery of the great potash deposits of Germany. The work was, however, prosecuted until the middle of the nineteenth century; and in 1841 about 80 tons of kelp were produced in the parish of Duirinish; though the sale, according to the Rev. A. Clark, did "little more than repay the cost of making it."

Long periods of depression overtook the fishing industry during this century, as had happened often before that time and has since. It was prosecuted with a fair amount of success at the beginning of the century; but from that time it suffered a gradual falling-off; and by the year 1830 the herring appeared to have abandoned the lochs of Skye altogether. Writing in 1841, one of our ministers observes: "Indeed, there is reason to fear that the herring fishing will disappear from our coast"; while another, the Rev. John MacKinnon of Strath, in seeking a cause for the decline of the industry at that time, suggests that "it is due to the destruction of the spawn on the East Coast of Scotland." The slackness in this industry continued until about 1879, when an improvement set in that was maintained for several years.

Nor was the decline in the fishing trade due to lack of enterprise or initiative on the part of the people; for all were keenly susceptible to the importance of the industry. With a view to its development on the western seaboard of Scotland, the Scottish Fishery Society established a station at Stein of Waternish, among other places, in 1787. There a pier was constructed, houses and "stores" were built; but the venture proved a failure, and the Society was forced to sell their property there at a loss of £1241. Alexander, second Lord MacDonald, with characteristic altruism, spent large sums of money, in the first years of the nineteenth century, building fishing-boats, and in hiring expert fishermen from the East Coast of Scotland, in order to train the people of Skye in the best methods for prosecuting the industry; but his efforts were unavailing.

This public-spirited chief probed every avenue that might lead to the prosperity of his people. At the very beginning of the century he established a store at Kyle Akin, the first "shop" in Skye. It was owned by himself, and it was the means of supplying the simple wants of the inhabitants. "To the hopeful it hinted at the future extension of commerce on a large scale," writes Stanhope in 1805; but these sanguine forecasts were, of course, never realised, though many small shopkeepers were soon to establish businesses all over Skye, so that, about the year 1840, according to the Rev. A. Clark, "as many as forty people retailed merchandise" in the parish of Duirinish alone.

Although all his endeavours had so far been attended with failure, Lord MacDonald tried other schemes to improve the lot of his people. Hopes being entertained at that time that the Tertiary coal of Skye might prove a profitable undertaking, he induced trained miners to come from the South by the offer of high wages; and a start was made at Braes, and at Camusbàn in Portree Loch. Owing, however, to the thinness of the seam, its discontinuity, and the great difficulty of mining the coal, the work was finally abandoned after repeated trials had been vainly made to strike profitable seams.

Lord MacDonald was also interested in the marble of Strath; he had, indeed, often spoken of using that stone in the building of his castle at Armadale. But that project, too, never materialised, though much of the Strath marble was used in the construction of the great staircase of the castle, while large quantities of it went to the paving of the lobby of Hamilton Palace; and numerous consignments were sold to the Board of Ordnance for the making of millstones. By the last it was, however, abandoned, on account of the included grit that rendered impossible the cutting of slabs of the requisite dimensions.

A lime kiln, erected at Broadford, was the scene of a successful business for many years, and the lime produced there was of very high quality. The price charged to the tenants on the estates of MacDonald was 6d per boll for building, and 4d when the material was to be used merely for the purposes of manure.

The draining of St. Columba's Loch, near his residence at Mogstadt, had also engaged the attention of this good chief. The work had been begun as early as 1715; but it was left in abeyance owing to the troubles that flowed from the Jacobite rebellions. It was resumed in 1763, only to suffer suspension once more before it could be brought to completion. In 1819 Lord MacDonald employed a large squad of men to re-open the drains. The main trench is about ¾ mile long, 35 feet deep in parts, 114 feet in width at the top, and 9 feet at the bottom. After working at it constantly for five years, and spending about £10,000 on it, the undertaking was at last completed in the year 1824. Owing, however, to the difficulty of keeping the branch ditches free of aquatic plants, drainage is impeded, and the soured soil produces a fertile growth of sedges, to the detriment of the crop of hay.

In the early portion of the nineteenth century there were two, and even three, meal-mills in every parish. The millstones were produced from the granophyre of the island of Raasay, a rock peculiarly suitable for such a purpose; and there was a considerable trade in their manufacture. These millstones were supplied, not only to Skye, but to the adjacent mainland as well, sums varying from £9 to £12 a pair being charged by the masons for the finished article.

The practice of tanning leather by means of the bark of the birch, and the roots of *tormentilla vulgaris*, was continued until the middle of the nineteenth century; and most of the people fashioned their own shoes, or brogues, at that time. Many also made their own clothes; but before the middle of the century itinerant tailors came to be engaged in the work, for which they received a mere pittance. Until about 1840, all sacks for holding grain were made locally from sedges, or from straw; and the collars used as harness for horses were manufactured from the same materials.

The manufacture of fishing nets was carried on in most homes, and during the period of the "potato famine" it received much encouragement from philanthropic agencies in Skye. Although there was a large amount of production then, the wages paid were very low. The women were adepts at this work, many still practising the art when the second portion of the nineteenth century was well advanced.

About the year 1840, the wages paid for hired labour in Skye were as follows:—Farm workers, employed for the year, received from £5 to £10 in the case of men, while women, who served either indoors or in the fields, were paid at a rate varying from £3 to £4 a year, with board and lodgings.

Labourers, hired for casual work, earned 1s a day in summer and 9d in winter; while artisans, such as masons and joiners, were paid from 2s 6d to 3s for a day's work of at least twelve hours' duration.

MEANS OF COMMUNICATION.

The eighteenth century was drawing to its close before any thought was given to the construction of roads in Skye. In the year 1799 it had been decided by Parliament to lay a road between Kyle Rhea in Strath and Loch Bay in Waternish; but it was long after that year before the track was completed. According to the testimony of one, Stanhope, who toured Skye in 1805, there was no trace of a road inywhere on the island except the old tracks.

In the year 1804, a memorial was addressed to the Commissioners of Roads by the Chief of Sleat, Lord Alexander, urging them to proceed with the construction of the road already surveyed from Kyle Rhea to Stein, with branches, one of which, it was suggested, should proceed northwards from Sligachan, by Portree, to Aird of Trotarnish; and another from Broadford towards the south, by Kinloch, to Ardvasar. Lord Alexander pointed out that, in order to foster trade in the rearing and sale of black cattle, then the principal industry on the island, it was essential that good arterial ways should be made. It was decided to proceed with their construction immediately.

In 1806 interested parties, such as Colonel MacDonald of Lyndale and James MacLeod of Raasay, petitioned the Commissioners to grant facilities for the laying of a road from the west of Skye at Dunvegan to join the proposed northern road at Snizort;t for that way came the cattle from the Long Island to the market at Portree. Though this was the last of the main roads to be surveyed, it was the first to be completed. The contract for it was secured by Colonel MacDonald himself, and the work was finished, and very favourably reported on, by the year 1811.

Meanwhile, progress was slow in the construction of the other roads of Skye, and certain of the contractors were faced with financial ruin. The most difficult section of all proved to be that between Kyle Rhea and Sconser. In 1812 the Broadford-Ardvasar Road was finished. In the following year the section from Kyle Rhea to Sconser had been completed; but it was in a very unsatisfactory condition, owing to the state of the bridges and the surfacing.

The year 1816 saw the completion of that portion of the north road from Sligachan to Portree, its continuation to Uig being effected in 1819.

Of the road that was first proposed for Skye, that from Kyle Rhea to Stein, certain sections, such as that from Tigh a' Phuirt in Sconser to Sligachan, and a large portion in Bracadale, had not yet been contracted for; and it was not until 1825 that the latter was completed.

By the year 1840, stretches of good roadway had been constructed in several parishes, and the Rev. Roderick MacLeod of Snizort, who wrote the Statistical Account of Bracadale in 1841, stresses the decided benefit to his own district of the formation of a "parliamentary road." An interesting commentary is made in the same year by the Rev. A. Clark of Duirinish on the conservatism of the people, and their prejudices against innovations in any shape or form. He states that "for some years after the construction of roads, the common people would not, on any account, travel on them, alleging that stones and gravel bruised their feet. They preferred to follow the old paths, uneven and boggy as these were."

For some years, even after the middle of the century, there were several places in Skye, inhabited by considerable communities, which were not served with roads. In the Report of the Crofters' Commission of 1884, mention is made of the isolation of the townships of Mugarry and Glenmore, which, with a population of over 200 souls, were "without even a tolerable track, though they were situated some four miles from any constructed roadway."

The first steamship service to Skye was inaugurated by Messrs. Hutchison about 1830. Previous to that time, communication with Glasgow and the south was effected by means of sailing vessels, which, owing to the calls made at numerous intermediate ports, took ten to fifteen days to complete the voyage. By 1840 a steamboat plied weekly between Glasgow and Skye. But the sailings ceased during the months of winter.

Owing to the inadequacy of the transport services then, much inconvenience and loss were sustained by the people of Skye. Even as late as the "early eighties" of last century, fishermen in Glendale were constrained to use turbot as bait for cod and ling, as the last two alone could be preserved for sale by drying.

POPULATION.

It has already been shown that the population of Skye had been increasing steadily towards the end of the eighteenth century; and it now falls to be recorded that the increase was well maintained during the first part of the nineteenth century. In the year 1801, when a census was undertaken for the first time in Britain, the population of Skye was discovered to be 16,000. The growth advanced year by year until, by 1841, when it had attained its peak, it had reached 23,000, thus representing an advance of 44 per cent. during a period of forty years. Captain Fishbourne, who, we have seen, was stationed in Skye as Inspector by the Committee for the relief of destitution in 1848, says the population of Raasay then was 975, and of Rona 116.

The growth in population during these years is a remarkable phenomenon, when we bear in mind the repeated drains made by emigration. The increase is attributable to two causes—first, to the practice of vaccination, which arrested the ravages of smallpox, and, secondly, to the division of land into holdings in the first and second decades of the nineteenth century, and the subsequent sub-division of these crofts by the original occupiers among their relatives.

As a result of the potato famine of 1845, the clearances, the consequent emigration, and the constant trek to the south in search of employment, a steady decrease in the population set in after 1841. In 1861 it had dwindled to 19,000; twenty years later it was 17,700; and by the beginning of the present century it had declined to 13,800—a decrease of 40 per cent. in the space of sixty years.

The practice of recording vital statistics had been introduced in 1800; but the first entry in the parochial registers of Skye was not made until 1803, in the district of Minginish, which, for several years, kept a record distinct from that of its parish (Bracadale). The first entry in the register of the parish of Portree is in September, 1806; for Strath it was made in 1820, and in 1823 both for Snizort and for Kilmuir. It is noticeable that for several years entries are made in a very desultory manner, an irregularity which was continued until the middle of the century. Thus, irregularity was continued until the middle of the century. Thus, in the register for the parish of Portree, there is only one item, a birth, for the year 1806. The following year is a blank. Two births are recorded for the year 1808, and they took place in April; one occurs for December, 1809, and another for August, 1810. Several notifications of birth appear for the year 1811, and the numbers are well maintained until March, 1813, after which, with the exception of two entries in 1814, there is nothing until June, 1815. So far as marriages were concerned, the period 1806 to 1811 is entirely a blank, nor is there any record of one from January, 1812, until September, 1816. The great proportion of marriages, when recorded, fall between January and March of each year.

The Span of Life.

Instances of individual longevity are no more remarkable during the nineteenth century than they were in the previous one; and as the practice of the registration of births had not become a regular institution during the early part of this century, the ages ascribed to certain members of the community must be recorded with caution. The Rev. A. MacGregor, who wrote the Statistical Account of Kilmuir in 1841, makes mention of the death of a John Nicolson in Staffin, a man noted for his knowledge of the traditional tales and the poetry of the Gael, who was reported to have lived to the age of 105 years. At the same time, the Rev. John Mackinnon considers it worthy of notice that one of his parishioners, "who never wore but the kilt," had accomplished a walk of twenty-four miles in one day, although he was in his 84th year.

DISEASES.

The dread scourge of smallpox, that had so often before taken a heavy toll of life in Skye, had been effectively stayed by the introduction of vaccine; but its incidence was still a matter to be feared, and numerous deaths resulted from it. Fevers also were common, and their visitations cut off many people. Typhoid had been virulent in Raasay about the year 1850; and it recurred frequently in Sconser until the close of the century.

There are few recorded cases of consumption during the early part of the nineteenth century. The Rev. A. Clark, writing of Duirinish in 1841, states that "fatal diseases, especially consumption," were unknown in that parish; and in 1860 a certain Dr. Morgan, who had been resident in the island of Raasay, says he "did not come on one case of phthisis" during his sojourn there. That the island of Skye was not, however, wholly free of this disease is evidenced by the fact that the parish minister of Portree, the Rev. Coll MacDonald, avers that such a plant as coltsfoot was considered to be beneficial in the curing of bronchial affections—"and consumption."

Most of the people who write of that time advert to the prevalence of "severe rheumatic complaints," which they ascribe to the humid nature of the climate. "As might naturally be expected," writes the Rev. Coll MacDonald, "the variable and humid state of the atmosphere, in all seasons of the year, is found highly injurious to the human constitution, and produces among the inhabitants many diseases, rheumatics, asthma, fever, and consumption."

WEATHER.

In discussing the climatic conditions that prevailed in Skye until the end of the eighteenth century, we have seen that, contrary to traditional notions, the state of the weather in our island had not suffered any appreciable change down the years. We also saw that many of those who were responsible for the compilation of the Statistical Account in 1793 often refer to the sensible deterioration in our climate; and it is significant of our tendency to praise the past that those clergymen, who wrote accounts of their respective parishes fifty years later, repeat the same popular illusion. "The seasons have undergone a decided change," states the Rev. Coll MacDonald in 1841; but, as has already been shown, all the evidence that is available goes to disprove that assertion. Indeed, when we come to consider all the records, the conclusion is forced upon us that the climate of Skye has been remarkable only for one feature. That has been its constancy in its inconstancy!

Wet seasons have happened in the past as often as they occur to-day. Certain years are specially singled out for the severity of the weather that prevailed. Such were 1807 and 1817, when, owing to the storms and rains, crops were grievously damaged. Again, 1833, 1835, and the two succeeding years stand out as periods of widespread destitution, owing to inclement weather conditions. In 1844 and 1845, right on till 1850, the summers had been excessively wet; a condition that led, in those years, to the development of that blight which ruined the potato crop in our island, as in other places on the western seaboard of the kingdom. "It is very rare, indeed," declares one of our ministers in 1841, "that there is in this parish a favourable seed-time; and in harvest, heavy rains and strong gales of wind prevail, by which the corn crops are either lodged or shaken; thus, all the hopes of the husbandman are in a great measure frustrated." Another of our parish ministers observes that "the chief obstacle to the improvement of agriculture is the raininess of the climate, which renders it difficult to secure a crop, though it should be reared."

So severe was the climate about the middle of last century that the Rev. Coll MacDonald states: "There is no natural wood growing here (parish of Portree), with the exception of a small quantity in the island of Raasay; and even this was almost annihilated in 1836 and 1837, those years of memorable destitution, when, from the wetness of the seasons, the people were unable to secure their peats." In their extremity they were forced to consume their turf huts as fuel. Lots were cast as occasion demanded, in order to ascertain whose house was next to be destroyed; and the responsibility for the maintenance of the family thus deprived of a home was determined by the same principle. "The Inverness Courier," of March, 1837, comments on the state of destitution brought about by inclement weather which then prevailed in Skye, as follows: "Crowding round the miserable fire, thus scantily supplied, and with only at long intervals a handful of meal and potatoes, we know not that the history of the British people ever presented such pictures of severe, unmitigated want."

PAUPERS.

The nineteenth century was well advanced before any attempt was made for the relief of destitution by communal effort. Those who, by bodily infirmity or feeble-mindedness, were unable to maintain themselves, were thus almost wholly dependent on the charity of neighbours, except for the meagre contributions the churches were able to make for their support. From this last source they received a dole varying from 2s to 15s a year—a miserable pittance that was ridiculously inadequate for their needs; but their people saw to it that they seldom suffered from want. Writing in 1841, the Rev. A. MacIvor of Sleat says: "Rentpayers consider it a duty to put aside a certain portion of their potatoes and corn for the poor, whose wants have hitherto been thus supplied." They begged from house to house, and none was ever turned away, although some of them, especially the insane, were often a source of trouble and danger to their hosts. The condition of those who, by age or infirmity, were unable to fend for themselves, must have been miserable in the extreme.

The able-bodied idiots, who roved at large over the island, contributed much to the entertainment of the young by their idiosyncrasies. Some of the most notable of these were: Gilleasbaig Aotrom, light in spirit as well as in head, famed for his practical jokes and the cleverness of his repartee; Alasdair MacGuirmean, noted for his gargantuan appetite; and Lachlain na Ciste, a morose churl with the strength of a gorilla, who lugged a wooden box about in his peregrinations, and was the unfailing butt of all who delighted in boyish pranks.

PASTIMES AND HABITS.

That gaiety of temperament, which characterised the people of Skye in the past, still persisted vigorously during the early years of the nineteenth century. Their fondness for singing, in spite of their privations, was the wonder and the delight of every stranger who happened to sojourn in their midst. We have elsewhere referred to the pleasing effect it produced on Dr. Johnson, when he landed on the island of Raasay, to hear the song of the harvesters. Stanhope recounts a similar experience that fell to him in Skye. "I do not know of anything more pleasing," says he, "or anything that brings one more in touch with plain unsophisticated nature, than the sounds of these untutored female voices singing in unison with their hands"; and the same writer states that "the rowers sang" as he was being ferried over to Scalpay. He also records the pleasure it gave him to hear the bagpipes played in Raasay House by a Mackay of the famous line, "who, after MacCrimmon, was considered to be the best piper in the Hebrides." This was in 1805; but a change was soon to come.

That transformation was wrought by the revivals. We have seen that the playing of musical instruments, the singing of secular songs, and the telling of the ancient tales, were all put under a ban; and that those who had the faculty for these arts mortified the talent, either voluntarily or under the coercive influence of public opinion. In Trotarnish, Bracadale, and Duirinish, the new outlook was most developed; for there the work of the evangelist had been more intensive than elsewhere on the island. In these localities the ceilidh was no longer an institution. The people became less sociable, and the native lightness of heart was damped under a cloud of gloom. "It is rare to hear a song sung now," says the Rev. A. Clark of Duirinish in 1841, "still rarer to hear the pipe or the violin." Thus it happened that much of the precious heritage of our race was irretrievably lost.

All gatherings, except those held for religious purposes, were viewed with disfavour, with the result that none but the wayward now joined in the dance. At the waulkings, the women no longer sang their rhythmic labour-song, as they heartily tossed the web from hand to hand; and innocent assemblies for athletic contests, and such games as shinty, were practically discontinued. The

Rev. A. MacGregor of Kilmuir tells us that, by 1841, the piper's lament was no longer heard at funerals, although, "a few years ago, as many as two pipers were always present."

Marriage functions also had lost much of their pristine hilarity, so that for several years before and after the Disruption only five or six persons attended the celebration; and, according to one of our parish ministers of that time, the marriage feast consisted of "potatoes and herring, with a glass of whisky."

Superstitious Practices.

Superstitious beliefs lingered on among the people generally, even as late as the middle of the nineteenth century. The writers of the Statistical Account of 1841 make frequent mention of the survival of irrational beliefs as was indicated by the scrupulous care people exercised in order that they might not violate certain time-honoured practices.

Especial credence was given to the power of the moon to shape the course of events; so that most were careful to observe its particular phase before they undertook certain works. They still imagined that, in its crescent stage, it communicated "a growing quality to substances"; and then they carried out such operations as sowing the seed, the slaughtering of animals, the shearing of sheep, and the clipping of human hair; while they would not begin to plough, to reap, to cut timber or peat, until the moon was in its wane; for then alone would the natural juices depart and drying be expedited. It should be added that a sneaking regard for these observances may even still be noticed in certain parts of Skye.

The belief in witchcraft, in second sight, and in fairies, was entertained by many after the middle of the nineteenth century; and the existence of "the evil eye" exercised a strong influence over the mind of the credulous, even as recently as the beginning of the present century. The possession of that power, like its cognate talent, second sight, was held to be, in some cases at least, an involuntary faculty that might be developed in one at any time. To guard against its intrusion, according to the compiler of the Statistical Account for Snizort in 1841, there was pronounced every morning, while the person was engaged in the operation of washing the face, the following incantation:

"Gu'm beannaicheadh Dia mo shùil,
'S beannaichidh mo shùil na chì
Beannaichidh mise mo nabuidh
'S beannaichidh mo nabuidh mì."

Numerous instances of superstitious practices have come under the writer's observation, even at the end of the century under review, and mention may be made of three. One was the case of an old man who peregrinated a township, carrying in a vessel a sample of a cow's milk that was alleged by him to have been robbed of its essence by the "evil eye." He went thus from house to house, in the hope that the possessor of the spell, by the act of looking on the milk, would thereby restore its lost virtues.

Another example was the application of a serpent's head to a local swelling on a cow that was supposed to have been stung by an adder; and the last was the rite performed on a heifer, sickening, as was thought, under the influence of the evil eye, by sprinkling the animal with water in which a silver coin had been dipped and a live cinder quenched. When this remedy failed to effect a cure, a band of cloth was tied round the middle of the animal and an incantation was uttered somewhat as follows:

"Ge b'e co leag ort an t-sùil
Gu'm mùch i air fein
Gu'm mùch i air a thùr
Gu'm mùch i air a spréidh."

FAUNA.

We have seen that in the previous century the number of sheep on the island was less than the stock of cattle; but in the nineteenth century, owing to the demand for wool, and the formation of large sheep farms, the number of sheep increased by leaps and bounds. The small native breed now came to be replaced by that secured from the crossing of the "Caoraich Bheaga," as the former were called, with the larger variety from the South. This happened about the beginning of the century; and the resultant variety, though far superior to the original breed in size, was much inferior both as regards the quality of the wool and the savour of its mutton.

Some of the smaller tenants continued to rear the indigenous sheep even until the middle of the century; for the Rev. A. Clark states that there were several of them in Duirinish in 1841. Long before that time the larger farmers were beginning to dispense with the larger breed of blackfaced sheep and to introduce the Cheviot.

The noted black cattle were still being reared in considerable numbers during the earlier part of this century, for they were held in high estimation by dealers from the South. So likely, indeed, were they to continue the dominant breed, that when agreements were composed for a long period of time contracts came to be proverbially referred to as lasting so long "as milk can be got from black cattle."

Cattle and horses constituted the wealth of the people of Skye until about 1810, when they were superseded by the sheep. During the earlier portion of the century a large number of horses was kept, and they were so hardy as to be able to maintain themselves in the open all winter. Consequently, their number was much in excess of what was necessary.

Some of the larger farmers kept a few hogs; but these animals never rooted themselves in popular favour in Skye. The number of goats was being gradually reduced; though a few persisted in the feral state even as late as the first decade of the twentieth century.

The Rev. A. MacIvor of Sleat states that no moles, polecats, or hares existed in Skye when he wrote the Statistical Account in 1841; and he adds that the hare had been twice introduced, but "it had disappeared."

MILITARY.

Mention has already been made of the great demand for men that took place during the course of the American War of Independence. An even greater need for soldiers arose when the excesses of the French Revolution, and their consequences, threatened the stability of the whole of Europe. Hundreds of our men were then taken into the Army, many of them being concussed to join through the efforts of the "Press Gang."

In order to meet the possible contingency of a French invasion, a regiment of volunteers was raised in Skye in the year 1798. It was established purely for the defence of the island, and it consisted of ten detachments, officered by the local gentry, many of whom were retired soldiers. On the conclusion of the Peace of Amiens, in 1802, this volunteer force was disbanded. It was shortly afterwards to be resuscitated, when our relations with France came once again to be strained; and in 1803 it was decided to raise two regiments in Skye for Home Defence. One of these was commanded by James MacLeod, the last chief but one, of Raasay, and by Alexander MacDonald of Lyndale, both holding the rank of lieutenant-colonel. The great victories that were won through the skill of Lord Nelson rendered the continuance of this force unnecessary; and it was demobilised in 1807. The flow of men to the Army, and in a lesser degree to the Navy, was, however, steadily maintained from the closing years of the eighteenth until about the middle of the nineteenth century. According to a statement made by the Rev. Dr. Norman MacLeod, the island of Skye made a contribution to the fighting forces of the Crown during a period of forty years, from 1797, of "21 lieutenant-generals and major-generals, 45 colonels, 600 commissioned officers, 10,000 common soldiers, and 120 pipers." The Rev. Roderick MacLeod, Free Church minister of Snizort, once quoted this assertion at a meeting of the Assembly in Edinburgh as he was inveighing against those responsible for the depopulation of Skye to provide more room for sheep; and he added the clause: "Besides no insignificant number of officers and men to the British Navy." It is said that this information was supplied by one who was himself a distinguished son of Skye, namely, Sir John MacDonald, the son of Norman MacDonald of Bernisdale; and as he was Adjutant-General of the Forces, he was in a position to acquire accurate knowledge.

In one of her poems, the bardess, Màiri ni'n Iain Bhàin, refers to the same facts:

"Bha corr agus deich mile
Bho'n rìgh a ghabh an t-òr
Gu onair 's dion na rìoghachd
A Eilean grinn a' Cheò."

That an island so circumscribed in area, and of so scanty a population, should have furnished such a large number of men to the Army and the Navy, seems truly phenomenal; but from the observations of others who were conversant with the facts, one is justified in concluding that the statement may not be unduly exaggerated. Thus, Alexander Smith, the author, who was the son-in-law of a famous military officer of Skye, Lieutenant Charles MacDonald of Ord, says: "Of the miniatures of photographs kept in every family in Skye, more than half are soldiers, and several have attained to no mean rank." Another authority, General Stewart of Garth, observes: "There are so many old soldiers settled in Skye receiving pensions for wounds, and length of service, that the circulation of so much money is no small advantage to their native isle. . . . Whilst so many soldiers returned home to enjoy their country's reward, I have access to know that an equal number settled in other parts of the kingdom after their discharge"; and Colonel Alexander MacDonald of Treslane, writing in 1848, declares that the conditions prevailing in Portree on the day the pensioners were being paid were paralleled only by those that obtained on a market day in the village.

Several of the distinguished soldiers have already been referred to, notably, Sir John MacDonald, son of Norman MacDonald of Bernisdale, who had attained the rank of Adjutant-General of the Forces. He was a man of striking appearance, whose square face and widely-set eyes bespoke the man of forceful disposition and steady deliberation. He had rendered renowned service in the wars of the Peninsula and of Egypt. He died in 1850 at the age of 80 years.

He had a brother who was no less distinguished than himself. This was General Alexander MacDonald, whose name will ever remain fresh on the pages of history as the hero of one of the most daring exploits in the annals of war. When his contingent was surrounded by dense masses of the French on the fateful field of Fuentes Donoro, and escape seemed impossible, he succeeded in bursting through the serried lines of the enemy—an adventure that has deservedly been named "The Brilliant Feat of Arms." He died in 1856, in the 70th year of his age. Two other members of the MacDonalds of Bernisdale and of Scalpay, nephews of the foregoing, are also known to fame. One was Major-General Norman MacDonald, brave and debonair, who fought in many a field, and culminated a career of distinction in the Crimea. He died at an advanced age in 1892. The other was Brigadier-General the Right Hon. J. H. A. MacDonald, who, though only a volunteer officer, yet possessed such brilliant military talents that he gained for himself the title of "The Heaven-born Soldier."

From among a notable galaxy of the family of MacLeod, a few names are singled out. There was Lieutenant-General Sir John MacLeod (Seochd Unish), a son of "The Old Trojan," Donald MacLeod of Bernera, and his third wife, Margaret MacLeod of Greshornish. He was a man of most commanding presence. A full-brother, Sir Charles, also rose to the rank of lieutenant-general. He won distinction in India, especially in the Mahratta War of 1817, and is said to have been "exceedingly handsome."

Of the MacLeods of Gesto many had raised themselves to rank and to fame, but chiefly in the service of the Netherlands. The most outstanding of them was Major-General Norman MacLeod, whose son, Lieutenant-General Norman MacLeod, had a brilliant career in the Dutch Brigade; while a grandson rose to the rank of vice-admiral in the naval service of that country.

The MacLeods of Borline are represented in the military annals of the early part of the nineteenth century by Major-General Norman MacLeod, who saw service in Cape Colony, in Spain, and in India during the Mahratta War. He was a man of impressive appearanre, tall and muscular, with features that bore a striking resemblance to those of the Duke of Wellington. He was drowned in the Irish Sea in 1831. Another of this famous family was Major-General William C. MacLeod, who spent the greater part of his life in India. He died in 1880. His son was the distinguished Indian officer, Major-General Donald MacLeod, C.B., D.S.O.

Of another branch of the clan, the MacLeods of Orbost, the most notable men were two brothers, Donald and Alexander. They served chiefly in India, and both attained the rank of major-general.

Another farm in Duirinish, Varkasaig, produced a distinguished son in General Sir Donald MacLeod of the Indian Army. He died in 1843, and his only daughter, Mary, was married to John MacLeod, the last chief of Raasay.

Of the Raasay MacLeods, the most eminent was General Sir John MacLeod, who, from his outstanding skill as a gunnery officer, was made Director-General of Ordnance on the express recommendation of the Duke of Wellington. He occupied this post, specially created for him, until his death in 1833.

The MacAskills of Ru'n Dunain and their offshoot of Bracadale occupy a position of high distinction in the military history of Skye.

As references have already been made to some members of that famous family, we need only make a passing mention of certain of them here. The best known were Major-General William MacAskill, who became Governor of Mauritius. He died in 1815. There was also Major-General Sir John MacAskill of Bracadale, who was mortally wounded in India in the year 1845.

Of the family of MacKinnon the most famous soldiers of the nineteenth century were Major-General Henry MacKinnon, youngest son of William, thirty-second chief. He fought in Egypt, and afterwards in Spain, where he was killed while leading his men through a breach in the walls at the storming of Ciudad Rodrigo. In writing of his death, Southey says: "Perhaps the country has never sustained so great a loss since the death of Sir Philip Sydney." His nephew, Major-General Daniel MacKinnon, was another of our islesmen who had led a brilliant career in India. Then there was Major-General Sir William MacKinnon, a brother of the Rev. Dr. Donald MacKinnon, who was the last of the famous succession of ministers in the parish of Strath. He served in the Army Medical Corps, and was promoted Director-General of the Army Medical Service in 1889. His proved efficiency and his conscientious attention to duty won for him the golden opinion of his Parliamentary chiefs. He died in 1897.

It was no doubt the prowess of men such as these that our sweet-voiced bard, Neil MacLeod, so beautifully extols in one of his songs:

"...... na laoich a bha gaisgeil
A cheannsaicheadh feachdan 's a' chòmhraig,
Gu buadharra, cruadalach, smachdail
Nach lùbadh fo chasan luchd fòirneart;
Fo shuaicheantas luaineach am bratach
'S na pioban le'n caismeachd ri ceol daibh,
Cuir fuinn air na suinn bha gun ghaiseadh,
Nach tionndadh le taise 's an tòrachd."

EDUCATION.

In a previous section we have seen that schools had been erected in all the parishes of Skye during the eighteenth century; and, in addition to the parochial schools, others had been built in several districts. Thus we find that before the middle of the nineteenth century there were as many as five in Bracadale; while in the adjoining parish of Duirinish the number at the same time was no fewer than ten. In the parish of Portree there was, however, but one school in 1841; and in large districts like Braes, whose school-population was then about 120, and the townships of Glenmore and Mugarry, with an aggregate of 50 children between the ages of 6 and 15 years, no provision whatsoever was made for secular education. In these places the "subscription schools" were kept on occasion; but, as they were so poorly paid, few teachers with any qualification could be got to serve in them. By the middle of the century a branch parochial school had been established in Raasay, where the "Three R's" were taught. About that time, also, it happened that a public-spirited Colonial, named MacDermid, who was born in Borve, bequeathed a sum of £1000 for the endowment of a school in his native township and another in the district of Braes. In the former place, some £200 of the capital had been spent in the building of a school-house and its appurtenances; but the balance of the fund still allowed a yearly salary of £35 for the schoolmaster. This school was well attended, and it continued for some years to be in a flourishing condition.

There was a parish school in Snizort, while a school was set up in Uig, about 1845, on "the Assembly Scheme." Kilmuir was then served by the parochial school, in which the average number of pupils was 70 in summer and 130 in winter; but, according to a writer of the time, the attendance was very irregular, on account of the inability of the parents to provide their children with suitable clothes and to supply books. In this parish there had been established, long before the middle of the century, another school, in which the medium of instruction was exclusively Gaelic; and, indeed, most of the schools on the island, apart from the parish school, were of this type. In 1811 the Gaelic School Society began to found schools in the Highlands; and it was as a result of the efforts of that patriotic organisation that some were built in Skye. But those who had the cause of the Gaelic language at heart had reason even then to deplore the indifference shown by the people to the welfare of their native tongue. Several of the ministers who wrote an account of their parishes in 1841 advert to the growing tendency on the part of those who were constrained to go South in quest of employment to return with a smattering of English, which they intermixed with Gaelic by way of airing their knowledge of the foreign tongue.

Even in those districts where schools existed, there does not seem to have been any great desire on the part of the people to take advantage of the opportunities provided for the education of their children. One of the ministers, who wrote in 1841, inveighs against the prevailing unconcern for learning, and even goes so far as to suggest the desirability of introducing "the compulsory regulations of Prussia," in order to overcome it. His assertion is borne out by the observation of another minister, who, writing at the same time of the parish of Bracadale, with its five schools, asserts that there were about 400 children between the ages of 6 and 15 years, and no less than 800 adults, who were wholly illiterate. As the adult population of Bracadale at that time was 1180, we see that over two-thirds of the people belonged to that category. That a gradual advance was, however, being made is shown by the declaration of the Rev. A. Clark of Duirinish in 1841, that, whereas two-thirds of the adult population of his parish could neither read nor write, only one-half of the children between 6 and 15 years were in a state of absolute illiteracy.

The salaries of the parochial schoolmasters of Skye in 1841 ranged from £23 a year, which was paid in Duirinish, to £30 in Kilmuir. Those teachers who served in schools other than that of the parish were paid from £8 to £25 per annum—sums which were sometimes supplemented by fees, but these were in most cases merely nominal. It is significant to find that the stipends of the parish ministers at the same time varied from £150 in Bracadale to £271 in Strath.

As was to be expected, those parochial schoolmasters who had cast in their lot with the Free Church were dismissed from their charges in 1843, and schools had to be built by the new denomination for the children of their adherents.

The Poetry of the Nineteenth Century.

We have seen that, during the previous century, only one bard of note could be claimed for Skye, and that even he had produced his best work furth the island. In the succeeding century, however, several poets make their appearance; though it must at once be stated that in none of them do we find the fire and the depth of feeling that characterise the works of William Ross.

Taking the chief poets of the nineteenth century in their chronological order, the first we meet with is Murdo MacLeod, son of Alasdair Og Thriaslain, who occupied a farm on the western shores of Loch Snizort. Of his works only one piece has been preserved; and it takes the form of a dialogue between the young bard and his kindly mother, who exhorts him, in the most winning way, to forsake his libidinous manner of life. She assails him with many a homely thrust; while the poem sparkles with such rare wit, and exhibits such a range of experience, and such consummate mastery of the intricate art of Gaelic versification, that the reader is forced to conclude that this piece is but one of many that the author had composed, but which have been lost, like the works of many others of our island bards. The following verse, among other features, shows his skill in metrical technique:

"Ministear no pàpà
A dh' fhàil'nuich 's a' ghniomh sin,
Olc no math a rinn iad
Chan fhaighnichear dhiots' e.
'S bh' fhearr dhut a bhi céillidh
Ri ceusadh do mhiannan
'S ma rinn iadsan eucoir
'S iad féin a bheir diol ann."

Murdo MacLeod emigrated to Carolina about the year 1810, and we hear no more of him.

DO'ULL NAN ORAN.

A poet of whose works much more is extant is Donald MacLeod, "Do'ull nan Oran." This noted bard was a native of Glendale, where he was born in 1787. His father, from whom he inherited his genius, was a farmer in a small way; and was, besides, a man of such intelligence and incisiveness of expression as marked him off from the common run of his fellows.

Donald was an only child, and seems to have received an education as good as could be obtained locally at that time. He early showed signs of the genius that was latent in him; for, while still a boy of fifteen years, he produced his first poem, "Oran

Aitreamh Ruairi," descriptive of a dwelling-house that had been erected by a relative.

> " 'S ann an Steinn a thog thu 'n aitreamh
> Anns am faighte ghloinne lionta
> Ruma glas is fion na Frainge
> Uisgebeath' is branndaidh riomhach
> Gheibhinn ann gach seorsa bidh
> Chan urrain mi dhoibh 'ga chunntas
> Cruithneachd is brisgeidean Innseach
> Muc 'ga sgriobadh 's muilt 'g an ruagadh.'

As incidents in his early life moved him, he continued to compose on a variety of subjects. When he was about the age of twenty years, the "Press Gang" was active in Glendale, as elsewhere in Skye, and, in order to shield his son from their attentions, his father secured for him an appointment as collector of road taxes on the estate of his chief. That office suited a man of his talents in an admirable way; for under the varied experience it afforded of men and things, his mind rapidly developed. He was deeply interested in the general lore of the Highlands, his mastery of the vocabulary and the idiom of the Gaelic language being so marked that he soon came to be recognised as the best story-teller of his day in Skye. The originality of his wit, the point of his ready repartee, were known to all; while the flick of his satire, stinging, but seldom vindictive, was never administered at the expense of personal dignity.

In 1811, when he was twenty years of age, he published an anthology of verse, miscellaneous and original, running to about 270 pages. It contained seventeen poems of his own composition, some humorous, some martial, and a few amatory pieces, all of which possess considerable merit.

His best known humorous piece is "Oran Mhurchaidh Bhig," a dialogue between a local elder's horse, whose dignity had been sorely affronted, and a hapless herd-lad who presumed to ride it home in the saddle. The poem is full of droll banter and amusing exchanges of wit. The metrical scheme follows that of "Cabar-féidh"; otherwise it owes nothing to that great masterpiece.

The first part of each verse is the effusion of the discomfited halflin, the remainder the withering retort of the insulted steed:

" Thuirt esan is e 'g éirigh,
Mo léirchreach, mar phrannadh mi.
Cha dean mi tuilleadh feuma
'S a bheist bheir thu ceannach air,
Ged tha thu leis an éildeir,
Chan éirig air m' anam thu;
'S ma 's e mo ghalair bàis e,
Gu'm pàigh thu ri m' allaire."

The spirited animal rallies the upstart thus with scorn:

" A Mhurachaidh bhig nam biodh tu glic,
Cha b'ann ri sud a dh' fhanadh tu.
Ach dhol dachaidh, gun aon each,
O'n chleachd thu bhi 'd fhear cairiste.
Bha m' eòlas ort da bhliadhna,
'S tri miosan a bharrachd air,
'S chan fhaca mi each diollaid
Dol riamh gu do dhorus leat."

In the same sarcastic strain is his "Rann Molaidh a' Bhàta"; while its sequel, "Rann Fìrinn," is a diverting description of a crazy hulk long past its best:

" Bha i sgallach breac mar dheile
Air dhroch lochdradh:
Bha sruth dearg bho cheann gach tàirne
Mar a' chorcair.
Mar bha meirg air a cnamh,
'S a làr 'ga grodadh,
Bha nid nan coraichinn còsaig
'Na buird mhosgain."

His satire on the elders of Lonmore, produced later in life, is no less amusing; but it is somewhat marred by the introduction of personalities. Although, by all accounts, the conduct of our bard was always exemplary, it would appear that the local elders, in a censorious mood, had been told of some pecadilla or other, and that their strictures had aroused his ire; for he assails the back-biting busybodies of the church with venom in his words:

" Ma gheibh thu drama bho dhuin' uasal,
Tha thu 'n uair sin air do mhàbadh,
Ma chuir thu car thar do ghualainn,
Sealtainn bhuat le feithe-ghàire,
Bheir Iain MacAlasdair suas thu—
Leugh thu ' 'N Cuairtear ' air an t-Sàbaid,
Fuiling a nise do bhinn
Bho Chalum Seang 's bho Eoghainn Tàilear."

His love affairs were no whit more fortunate than those of many a brother bard. When he was about twenty years of age he came under the spell of a neighbouring farmer's lovely daughter, a Miss Stewart of Borrodale. She heartily reciprocated his feelings; but her relatives did much to ruffle the course of true love, until her untimely death obviated the necessity for further interference. One of the lyrics he composed to her shows touches of beautiful imagery. It is called "Luinneag Ghaoil," of which the following is the first stanza:

"Dh' fhàg mi slàn mo sgàthan beòshlaint,
Snathean m' àraich, 's geard mo dhòchais;
Càil mo bhlàth'is, is fàin' mo stòldachd,
Bàigh na h-òigh le deòin nach tréig mi."

A similar verdict is due his "Oran Reisimeid 'ic Shimidh," which he wrote at the age of twenty-three. This is a poem of a very high order, marked by untrammelled freedom of movement, pleasing conceptions, and well-knit vigorous verse:

"Chan eil cùnntas air fasain
Fo'n chrùn th' aig Righ Shasuinn,
Nach eil ionnsaicht am pearsa
Na th' aca de àireamh.
Is mùirneach ri 'm faicinn iad,
Is cliùiteach ri 'n claistinn iad,
Is lùghmhor an casan,
'S is bras an cath-làmh iad.

Is àluinn an crioslachadh,
Stàilinneach, pistealach,
Slioslannach, deàrrsach,
Sgàrlaideach, leisrichte,
An càradh fo itean,
Thug stàtaichean meas daibh,
Nach fiosraich mo chànain."

His lament, composed in 1808, to Donald MacDonald, who died in Grishornish, is suffused with genuine feeling, and possesses high poetic merit. Witness the fine rhythmic flow of the following verse:

"Na'm b'ann le fòirneart luchd dò-bheart
Thigeadh leònadh 'n ad charaibh
Dheannta feòlach 'ga d' chòmhnadh
Le spionnadh dhòrn 's le cruaidh lannan
Le neart Chlann Dòmhnuill 's nan Leòdach
'S gach urra mór leis bu toil thu
Bu chomunn gòrach a steòrnadh
Do chur air fògradh dha d' aindheoin."

An elegy he wrote about the same time, on the death of Captain Alexander MacLeod of Vatten, who had served with distinction in India, is marked by great wealth of imagery and very deep sympathy.

When he was about twenty-four years of age, he relinquished his post as collector of road-taxes for that of fisherman to the castle. Soon, however, the fever of emigration affected him, like many another in Skye, and he sailed for America in the year 1829. He did not remain long in exile, for he returned to his native dale in 1833, when he set up in business as a general merchant. It was then that he composed some of his best work.

At the age of sixty he married a girl of nineteen years, and they had a family of four sons and six daughters. Two of the former were bards—Neil, the polished gentleman, the exquisite lyricist, and John, the wayward sailor-lad, whose patriotic lays and rollicking wit entertained his associates in many a port.

The harassing cares of a large family were not conducive to the exercise of the Muse, so that, with the exception of two poems, he produced nothing of note in later life. His "Oran an Uillt Mhóir" and "Oran do Thungaig" show a mind beautifully attuned to Nature's soothing influences, and in them he depicts the scenes of his native vale with that quiet charm and loving grace that one so often meets with in the works of his famous son.

Donald MacLeod died in 1873, at the ripe old age of eighty-six years, and was buried in the ancient churchyard of Kilchomhain, in Glendale.

It is a sad commentary on our lack of interest in the poets of our race that the works of a bard of such pronounced genius as Donald MacLeod should have been suffered so long to remain in broken and scattered fragments, with none to consider them worthy of being gathered together and presented to the world as a connected whole.

Mairi ni'n Iain Bhain (Mary MacPherson).

In the year that Do'ull nan Oran died, namely, 1873, the voice of another genius was raised in song. It was that of the bardess, Mary MacPherson, the daughter of a crofter in Skaebost named John MacDonald, or, as he was locally called, Iain Bàn MacAonghais Oig. Mary, who was the second youngest of a large family, was born at Skaebost in March, 1821. Having been brought up like other young women in her station of life, she early become proficient in those rural pursuits and domestic arts that were then the duty and the pride of every maiden to master.

In her twenty-seventh year she was married to a shoemaker in Inverness, one Isaac MacPherson, and they had a family of four children. Her husband died in 1871, and in the following year an event happened that was destined to become the turning point in her life. She was accused of a certain misdemeanour, found guilty (unjustly, as most declared at the time), and sentenced to a term of imprisonment. The sense of injustice, coupled with the infamy inflicted on her good name, so rankled in her spirit that it seemed to have inducted the gift of poetry—a faculty that had hitherto given no manifestation of its presence:

" 'S e na dh' fhuiling mi phian
Le Sasunnaich chrìon
Chuir gu 'n cluinneadh sibh riamh ri òran mi."

Soon after this incident she removed to Glasgow, and although she had then attained the advanced age of fifty years, she decided to enter the nursing profession. With a view to qualifying for that calling, she became a probationer at the Royal Infirmary, where, after serving a few years, she obtained a certificate.

During this period, and for some time after it, she joined in the social life of Highlanders in the cities of the South with characteristic fervour, being a welcome guest at the "gatherings" of her isles-folk in particular, and of Highlanders generally, in Glasgow and in Greenock. In celebration of these functions she often composed, and sang, songs that evoked a large amount of enthusiasm at the time; but now that the scenes have changed, and the personalities represented have passed away, one is forced to admit that the great majority of these effusions have no permanent value. Indeed, but few of her productions are worthy of preservation. She was incapable of sustained effort, her imagery was too fleeting and superficial, and we tire of her pleonastic and rambling treatment of her subject. In "Nuair Bha Mi Og," which is one of her best efforts, she rouses us momentarily with a pleasing sentiment here and there, only to accord us a shock elsewhere by her commonplace observations. In another of her most popular pieces, "Soraidh le Eilean a' Cheò," she depicts beautiful vignettes of scenes in her native isle; but displays them in such rapid succession, and in such a haphazard manner, that the mind wearies in following her, so that the whole production resolves itself into a glorified tourists' guide.

In the year 1882 she retired to her native district, where a house, "Woodside Cottage," was placed at her disposal, rent free, by the generous laird, Lachlan MacDonald of Skaebost. At that time the land troubles were agitating the island, and she championed the people's cause in speech and song. Many of her poems were then composed, though few of them possess any poetic value.

Among her works appear a large number of elegies; but in these, as in her political songs, she betrays the shallowness of her genius, borrowing largely from the works of other bards. Her most meritorious production in this branch of poetry is her "Tuireadh air Cluainidh," or lament for MacPherson of Cluny. It is noteworthy that in her works the love lyric occupies a very subordinate position; a trait to be accounted for by the fact that she was well advanced in years before she began to express herself in song.

Through the munificence of her patron, MacDonald of Skaebost, her poetry was published in the year 1891. It was taken down from her dictation (for she could not write) by John White, Inverness, and an introduction was compiled for the volume by the erudite scholar, Alexander MacBain.

Always fond of company, she degenerated in her old age into a mere gadabout, and during her wanderings she died suddenly in Portree in 1898, at the age of eighty years. She was buried in Inverness, where, in the chapel burial-ground, a monument was erected to her memory by one who had often been the subject of her songs—Charles Fraser Macintosh, M.P. for Inverness.

SHERIFF NICOLSON.

Alexander Nicolson was the son of Malcolm Nicolson, who was proprietor of the small estate of Husabost, in the parish of Duirinish. Here the future sheriff was born in the year 1827. He was educated privately, and at an early age proceeded to Edinburgh University, where he gained high honours both in literature and in philosophy. During the illness of Sir William

Hamilton he was appointed deputy to that renowned philosopher, and he afterwards became assistant to Professor MacDougall. Sir Archibald Geikie, who was one of his students in 1856, makes mention of the impression made on him by the "big-boned Celt with a look of strength and kindliness in his large and strongly-marked features."

At this time he intended to qualify for the ministry. With that end in view, he attended classes in the Faculty of Divinity, only to discover that he could not conscientiously pursue his studies; for, in his own words, "the officer's unform in that excellent body is painfully tight."

Thereupon he turned his attention to journalism, writing voluminously for several periodicals in an easy, graceful style.

On his father's death he decided to enter the legal profession, and was "called to the bar" in 1860. Owing, however, to that erraticism which has so often proved the undoing of some of the most brilliant members of his race, the great expectations entertained of him came to nothing; and, as Geikie says, "this most gifted and genial man became the most unsuccessful of the advocates who paced the floor of Parliament House."

In 1865 he was one of the commissioners appointed by the government to inquire into the state of education in the Highlands, and he gave of his abilities and his energies with zeal to that endeavour. Indeed, it was work of this nature, necessitating his attention only for a time, that best suited his genius, which was meant to sparkle, but not to emit a continuous flare.

In Edinburgh he was a member of several exclusive clubs, notably the "X" and the "Red Lion," at which his company was much sought, because of his affability, his brilliance, and his rare wit. When Sir William Thomson, afterwards the great Lord Kelvin, in his presidential address to the British Association in 1871, propounded the theory that life came to the earth through the broken fragments of meteorites, Nicolson delighted the members that evening at the Red Lion dinner by singing his clever skit on the "British Ass," one verse of which is quoted:

"To Grecian sages charming
Rang the music of the spheres:
But voices more alarming
Salute our longer ears.

By science bold, we now are told
How life did come to pass.
From world to world the seeds were hurled,
Whence sprang the British Ass."

Long-delayed preferment at length came the way of the briefless barrister, when, in 1872, he was appointed Sheriff of Kirkcudbrightshire; but he was not happy there, for he missed the congenial life of the capital. When his friend and admirer, Professor Blackie, succeeded in founding the Chair of Celtic in Edinburgh, it was confidently expected that Nicolson would become its first occupant. But, to the regret of many, he declined the proffered post.

In 1881 he published his unique compilation of Gaelic proverbs, a work that, for fulness of material and evidence of scholarship, will remain a monument to his name so long as the language of the Gael is spoken. When the land troubles in the Highlands had at last commanded the attention of the government, Sheriff Nicolson was nominated as one of the Commissioners; and we can trace his work in several portions of the epoch-making report produced by that august body.

In 1885 he was transferred from the Stewartry to Greenock; but there also he evinced no enthusiasm for his work, and, to the disappointment of all, relinquished his profession and retired to Edinburgh in 1889. His retirement, however, failed to bring him happiness. He suffered from periodic fits of depression, and his end came suddenly on the 20th of January, 1893. Sir James Crichton-Browne, in referring to his death, says of him: "He was a big man with a big heart, which was ever in the Highlands, or more particularly in the Hebrides, the glories of which he celebrated in a few exquisite lyrics." His best efforts were in praise of his native isle, all of them being characterised by a healthy patriotism and a beautiful sentiment blended with a noble reverence. Thus, in his pæan on the Isle of Skye, he writes:

" Many a poor, black cottage is there
Grimy with peat smoke;
Sending forth in the quiet evening air
Purest of incense.
Forth from their darkness I've seen
Coming pure linen;
And like the linen their souls were clean
Of them that wore it."

His martial song, "Agus Ho Mhórag," extolling the prowess of Highland soldiers on the field of battle, shows his great power of fitting words to a difficult metrical scheme:

> "Many were their deeds of arms
> 'Gainst the swarms of Hyder Ali.
> Leagured close in Mangalore
> Tippo and his hordes they baffled."

The same wonderful command of language is shown in his masterly translation of that greatest of sea-epics, "Bìrlinn Chlann Raoghnuill," by Alasdair Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair:

> "Drive the mountain-monsters onward,
> Ho ro hùg a bhì;
> Pounding grey-backed swirling eddies,
> Ho ro hùg a bhì;
> Send the surge in sparkles skywards,
> Ho ro hùg a bhì;
> Hoary-headed seas upswelling,
> Ho ro hùg a bhì;

His works are scattered throughout various publications. The fascinating articles on the Coolins he so much loved, appear in "Good Words." Two of his poems, together with a brief memoir, are given in Edward's "Modern Scottish Poets"; and the Rev. W. C. Smith, D.D., published several of his works and a sketch of his life in the year 1893.

NEIL MACLEOD.

Neil MacLeod was born at Pollosgan, in the district of Glendale, in the year 1843. He was the son of Donald MacLeod (Do'ull nan Oran), and the strong poetic strain in the father made itself early manifest a dominant trait in the son.

He was brought up like other boys in his station in life, but with this difference; he had a father whose mind was richly stored with the legendary and historical lore of the Highlands, and who could relate it in a manner that few could equal. The influence of such an upbringing on a youth whose faculties were naturally receptive can scarcely be over-estimated. Often he adverts to these happy days in the morning of his life, when—

> "Ann an dùdhlachd gharbh a' geamhraidh
> Cha b'e àm bu ghainn' ar spòrs;
> Greis air sùgradh, greis air dannsa,
> Greis air cainntearachd is ceòl;

Bhiodh gach seanair aosmhor, liath,
'G innseadh sgialachdan gun ghò,
Mu gach gaisgeach fearail, greannmhor,
Bha 'sa' ghleann 'nuair bha iad òg."

In his twenty-second year he left his native glen for Edinburgh, where he was to spend the remainder of his days. He was employed there by the firm of R. & R. MacLeod, tea merchants, the principal partner in which was his cousin. His work as agent for this company brought him into contact with all manner of people, among whom his unfailing courtesy and healthy humour made him a general favourite. We need not wonder, then, that his services were often in demand wherever Highlanders were wont to foregather in the cities of the south.

In 1889 he married Katherine Stewart, the daughter of a schoolmaster in Kensalyre; they had a family of two daughters, and a son who has won distinction in the medical profession, being a M.D. of the University of Edinburgh.

When he retired from business in 1911, he was presented with an illuminated address. A notable assemblage met to do him honour, and Professor Mackinnon paid a high tribute to his talents as a bard. He was not, however, to enjoy his retirement long, for his health had now become impaired, and he died in September, 1913.

Neil MacLeod has had the unique experience, for a Gaelic bard, of seeing his works pass through four editions in the course of his life-time. The first collection of his songs was published in 1883, under the title of "Clàrsach na Doire"; and such was its popularity that a second edition was called for ten years later. Other impressions were soon to follow. A third appeared in 1902, a fourth in 1909, while a fifth was produced in 1924.

Among his works the love-lyric holds a predominant place, no fewer than twenty of his poems falling in this category. In a very notable way he raised this type of song to a plane far higher than was customary among Gaelic bards in the past. While he does not fail to dwell on the physical charms of her who inspired his song, he is attracted the more by her mental qualities and spiritual traits. True love never surely exulted with more rapturous ecstasy over a tocherless maiden than it does in "Coille Chaoil":

> "Chan 'eil fearann, chan 'eil fonn
> Aig mo righinn òig;
> Ach tha cridhe glan 'n a com
> Aig mo righinn òig.
> Ged a bhiodh ar bothan lom,
> Is ar sporan gun bhi trom,
> Bhithinn sona ris an tom,
> Le mo righinn òig."

In that noblest of his works, "Màiri Bhaile Chrò," the poet's art has touched a level seldom attained by the master minds of any clime or age. Throughout this great pastoral the poet is so engrossed in rapt adoration of his subject that the self is almost wholly effaced. And he had plumbed those cruel depths into which the love-lorn are sometimes drawn, to be swirled hither and thither until the helm is finally wrenched out of the hand of reason. In that sad song, "Bi Seumas Leam a' Nochd," he kindles our sympathy for the island Ophelia even more powerfully than does Shakespeare himself.

Just as his amatory poems sound a new note in Gaelic literature, so in his satires and humorous pieces there is a complete freedom from that personal bitterness and those crudities of expression, tainted with obscenity, that too often mar the works of our other bards. Neil MacLeod was by nature incapable of administering a wound to his fellows; he soared superior to those petty feelings that seek to besmirch and annoy. But his sparkling wit glints through every stanza, delighting us with its playful banter and sheer harmlessness. One wonders whether the philosophic resignation of the old maid, who is prepared to throw herself on any man that may offer, has ever been more cleverly defined than in his "Oran na Seana Mhaighdinn":

> "Ged a bhiodh a sporan gann,
> Dhannsainn na'n tigeadh e;
> Ged a bhiodh a leth-shùil dall
> M'annsachd na'n tigeadh e:
> Biodh e dubh, no biodh e donn,
> Biodh e dubh, no biodh e donn,
> Na'm biodh casan air is ceann,
> Dhannsainn na'n tigeadh e."

In "Turus Dhòmhnuill do Ghlascho," comedy is skilfully blended with tragedy in a graphic description of the situation that develops when an unsophisticated islander falls into the clutches of the city harpy and her associates.

Throughout his works there glows a love of home that borders close on piety, reaching its highest pitch in his "Cumha Eilean a' Cheò," where he declares:

"Thigeadh bochdainn no beairteas,
Thigeadh aicead no leòn,
Chaoidh cha sgar iad mo chuimhne
Bho na glinn sin rim' bheò;
Ged' a shiubhlainn gach rìoghachd
Is gach tìr fo na neòil,
Bidh mo chridhe gu deireadh
Ann an Eilean a' cheò."

Like the other bards of our people, he was readily susceptible to Nature's influences; but what strikes us as strange is that, while he enthuses over the beauties of "doire, cuartag, agus glac," his native hills had for him so slight an appeal. Thus his references to the Coolins convey to the reader but little of the glamour and the majesty of these wonderful mountains; while his poem on Quiraing is utterly lacking in anything that inspires.

Hhe shows a marked tendency to point the moral, a large proportion of his poems being didactic in character. But while he may teach in some of them, none can say that he ever poses as the prude whose chief end is to preach to his fellows. Through them all there breathes the spirit of an earnest and clean-minded man. His "Tigh a' Mhisgeir" is a faithful exposure of the evils of intemperance. To him has been revealed, in a manner vouchsafed to few, the secret of the problem of life; and if it be granted that they possess most who lay least store on the material things of this world, then Neil MacLeod was truly rich in all that makes life worth while. When "the world is too much with us," it would be a good corrective were we to repeat that wish of his, "Ri Taobh na Tràigh," so simple in expression, so sublime in sentiment!

"Tha cuid an tòir air stòr 's air maoin,
'Gan ruith bho'm breith gu'm bàs.
Chan fhaigh iad fois, cha bhi iad saor
Ma chi iad sin aig càch:
Thoir dhòmhsa sìth, is gràdh, is gaol,
Ri taobh nan sruthan tlàth,
Mo bhothan beag fo sgàil nan craobh,
'S mo lios ri taobh na tràigh."

The same purity of outlook that guided his life pervades the whole of his works. His diction is always choice—he never wrote a word at which the most finical could take umbrage; and the polish of his verse is superior to that of any of our bards. He was a master of the art of versification, showing marvellous powers in adorning his lines with those subtle touches—alliterative effects, tropic linkages, and rhythmic stresses, that lend such a charm to the best of our Gaelic poetry:

"Tha 'n oigh 'n so bu bhinne guth,
Bu ghile làmh, 's bu ghrinne cruth,
'S an com a bha mar eal' an t-sruth,
    Gun dreach, 's gun bhlàth;
'S a cuailean dualach, clannach, dubh
    Gun chìr air cnàmh."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE HISTORY OF RAASAY.

ON the dissolution of the Lordship of the Isles, in 1493, Raasay and Rona, with the adjoining islands, together with the peninsula of Waternish, and the island of Isay, in Skye, became part of the territory of Siol Thorcuil, as the MacLeods of Lewis were called.

About the year 1510, the ninth chief of that clan, Malcolm by name, ceded to his second son a portion of his far-flung dominions, consisting of the islands of Raasay and Rona, with certain portions of the adjacent mainland, namely, Coigeach and Gairloch. The name of the new chieftain was Calum Garbh, and the line of which he was the first is accordingly known in history as "Clann 'ic 'ille Chaluim Ràrsaidh."

As was natural enough, this branch continued for some years to form an integral part of the parent stem. A reference is made to them as a separate entity when, in 1518, Sir Donald MacDonald of Lochalsh made an incursion into Morvern to avenge himself on the MacIans of Ardnamurchan, who had so consistently opposed his pretensions to the Lordship of the Isles. It is mentioned that among those who accompanied him as his allies were the MacLeods of Raasay. That they still owned MacLeod of Lewis as their superior is shown in a statement by Hugh MacDonald, the sennachie of Sleat, who, in referring to this episode, says: "Raisay had a consultation with his chief, the laird of Lewis."

In the encounter that ensued between the forces of Sir Donald and the MacIans at Creag an Airgiod, it is stated that MacIan fled, but was closely pursued, and finally captured. The account closes with the remark that he was "killed by the laird of Raisay." Even as late as 1549, the Chief of Lewis was still suzerain to the MacLeods of Raasay; for in that year Dean Monro observes: "This same MacGilliechallum should obey M'Cloyd of the Lewis."

At that time, and for fully two hundred years thereafter, the islands of Raasay and Rona were components of the extensive parish of Snizort in Skye. Indeed, one of the earliest notices we met with concerning these islands, apart from a reference made to Raasay as a point in the route of King Haco, when he came with his mighty Armada in 1263, is the statement that, in 1501, James IV., the Scottish king, presented to a certain Sir Nicholas Berchame "the vicarage of Kilmolowok in Rasay, one of the annexes of Snesford." In the ancient churchyard of Clachan the ruins of this chapel may still be seen, now almost embedded in the swelling turf, the result of countless burials. Like many another in the Highlands, this church was dedicated to St. Moluac, and a semi-circle of eight crosses was set at intervals to demarcate its precincts and form a sanctuary. Some of these crosses were still standing when Dr. Johnson visited the island in 1773, though the church was then "unroofed and ruinous."

The successor of Sir N. Berchame would appear to have been a certain Sir Norman MacPherson, whose decease in the year 1626 rendered the vicarage of "Sneisfort" vacant once more. The incumbency then devolved on one whose name was destined to become a familiar one in the history of the Western Isles. That was Sir Donald Monro, Dean of the Isles, who in 1549 made a tour of his diocese, and left on record a most interesting, if somewhat unreliable, account of it. He describes Raasay as wooded with birch, and with large stretches of fertile land, well cultivated; while its seas abounded with fish. He also states that there were many deer on the island then, although in Dr. Johnson's time there were none. The Dean states further: "There are in it twa castles, to witt, the Castle of Kilmorocht and the Castle of Brolokit, with twa faire orchards at the saids castells, with ane paroche kirke, callit Killmolowocke." . . . The land "perteins to McGyllychallum of Raarsay be the sword, and to the bishope of the iles be heritage."

In the account given of Rona the Dean says that it was well wooded, and assiduously farmed; for it produced abundance of corn. He states that it was inhabited by a lawless people, "scant of ony religion"; while the harbour, in the middle of the island, "is guyed for fostering of thieves, ruggairs, and reivars, till a nail upone the peilling and spulzeing of poure pepill." Anent this it is significant that one of the coves in "The Harbour" of Rona is still known as "Port nan Robaireann," or the Harbour of Thieves. Of Rona, as of Raasay, it is stated: "This ile perteins to McGyllychallum of Raarsay be force, and to the bishope of the iles be heritage."

In those days title deeds had not become a vogue in the Highlands, so that possession, especially "by force," was four parts of the law. "What care I," said a MacDonald of Keppoch, "for titles given on sheepskin; I claim my rights and titles by the edge of this sword." We have abundant evidence of it that the MacLeods of Raasay had on all occasions refused to acknowledge the Bishop of the Isles as their lord; for in "Acta Dominorum Concilii et Sessiones" we find that, on 14th March, 1532, an action was brought at the instance of "ane Reverend fader in God, Farquhar, Bischop of the Ilis and Commendatour of Colmekyll," against "MacGilliechallum, callit of Rasay," for his remissness in paying dues to the see of Iona; and, again, according to a statement quoted in "Collectanea de Rebus Albanicis," in reference to the sources of the rental of the Bishopric of the Isles in 1561, Raasay is entered as a part of the property of the bishop.

These incidents, with the exception of the last, took place during the chiefship of the first of the MacGillichalums, Malcolm Garbh, or "The Brawny," as he was called. Very few facts have been gleaned concerning this chief, the time of his death even being uncertain. It is probable that he lived until 1556, for in that year a charter for his lands was given under the government seal to "Malcolm Gillichalum Garbh." In "The Baronage of Scotland," by Sir Robert Douglas of Glenbervie, it is said that he "died in the reign of Queen Mary."

Malcolm left two sons who were known to history, namely, Alexander, the heir, and "John of the Axe," Iain na Tuaighe. It would appear that the second Chief of Raasay did not long survive his father, and that the guardianship of the young heir devolved on his uncle, Iain na Tuaighe.

Now it happened that this "John of the Axe" had been carrying on clandestine relations with the wife of his uncle, Roderick MacLeod, tenth Baron of Lewis. About the year 1539, the undutiful wife eloped with her youthful lover, and lived with him in Raasay, where, after her divorce by her first husband,

BROCHEL CASTLE.

she was probably married to Iain na Tuaighe. The fact that she was a MacKenzie of Kintail would not commend her to the clansmen of Raasay, who, at that time, were at war with her people over the lands of Gairloch. And when one of her daughters was betrothed to Alasdair Roy, the head of the MacKenzies of Gairloch, a real offence was given to the men of Raasay, with the result that the island was seething with indignation because a woman of their name had entered into the bonds of wedlock with one whose clan had been their most bitter foe for over half a century.

About that time the wife of "John of the Axe" died, and he married shortly afterwards a kinswoman of his own, the daughter of Allan MacLeod, chief of the Gairloch branch of the family. She had a brother named Roderick, a man who was noted in that barbarous age for dark schemings and acts of cruelty that gained for him the agnomen of "Nimheach," or "Venomous."

When a son was born of the second marriage, the ambitious Roderick conceived a scheme whereby he sought to remove all who had a prior claim to his nephew on the chiefship of Clann 'ic ille Chaluim. Being a man who, by his resource and cunning, had gained the respectful awe of all who knew him, it was an easy matter for him to wheedle his own kinsfolk to listen to his proposals.

To carry out his treacherous object, he sent an urgent message to Raasay, inviting the regent, with his sons and those of the late chief, to meet him post-haste in the island of Isay in Dunvegan Loch. He informed them that he would reveal matters of supreme importance to the clan, and that he wished all those related to the chief to meet and decide in secret conclave how best they might meet the contingency that had supervened. All obeyed the summons with one exception, the youngest son of Alexander, the last chief, who was then fostered from home under the care of a devoted warrior named Malcolm MacNeil.

On the arrival of his relatives in Isay, the crafty "Nimheach" received them with feigned cordiality, and they were sumptuously entertained. After he had regaled his guests with viands and wine, he announced that he was going to hold a consultation with the regent and all his relatives individually at first, and that after he had ascertained their respective views on the situation all were to return to the banqueting-chamber, where they would discuss collectively their course of action. The unsuspecting regent followed his scheming kinsman into a room at the far end of the house; but no sooner had he entered than he was murdered by two hired assassins, who were stationed one on each side of the doorway. Having thus disposed of his principal victim, the heir to the chiefship was next summoned, and he met a similar fate. All the other guests were likewise dealt with as they entered the chamber of death.

The man of treachery was, however, foiled in his designs. Well might he exclaim, with Macbeth:

> "There the grown serpent lies, the worm that's fled,
> Hath nature in him that will venom breed,"

for no sooner had MacNeil heard of the massacre than he conveyed his foster-son to the charge of Campbell of Calder.

Meanwhile, "Roderick the Venomous" made for the island of Raasay, where he placed himself in the hands of a few influential clansmen. He declared to these that he had discovered the existence of a secret understanding between their regent and the MacKenzies, a contract utterly prejudicial to the interests of their clan; that immediately he became aware of it he decided, from purely patriotic motives, to act without delay, and had accordingly rid them of men who were so base as to become traitors to their own race. The story was readily believed by the MacLeods, who, as already stated, had been incensed because of the matrimonial relations that had been entered into with their inveterate foes. Roderick was hailed as the saviour of the clan. He was appointed guardian to his nephew, the young son of the murdered regent, and was installed in Brochel Castle, where he lived with all the pomp of chief.

But Malcolm MacNeil, the faithful foster-father of the rightful heir, was not idle. He took his protégé back to Raasay, maintained him there, it is said, in a cave, and, by degrees, began to reveal him to such as, he had convinced himself, had discovered the true aims and the traitorous designs of Ruairidh Nimheach. He finally succeeded in winning to his side a band of resolute men, among whom was the warden of Brochel Castle. An attack was made on that stronghold by night; entrance was easily effected; but the usurper had escaped by lowering himself from the battlements on the landward side, and he made for Gairloch, only to be expelled shortly afterwards, it is said, by the MacKenzies. It is difficult to ascertain what his end was; but we find that, in August, 1569, when Donald Gormson, the Chief of Sleat, and MacKenzie of Kintail, had been induced by the Privy Council to submit their disputes to arbitration at Perth, the former was there enjoined "to cause Rory MacAlan, alias Nevynnach, and all utheris, the said Donaldis kin, . . . desist fra all trubbling or invasion of the said Lord of Garlauchis landis, rowmis, possessiones, etc., in all tyme cumin, and Donald will neither support, aide, nor give said Rory any maner of maintenance, but expel him and pursue him to the uttermost." In the following year this mischief-maker was again in trouble, when he was denounced by the Privy Council for molesting men engaged in the fishing industry in Loch Broom. He was then referred to as "MacLeod of the lands of Lochgair."

There is difficulty in assigning an exact date to the Massacre of Isay; but that diligent student of Highland history, Donald Gregory, places it in the year 1568; and when we consider the date of the strictures passed on its perpetrator by the Privy Council, a fact to which allusion has already been made, that time is highly probable. The Letterfearn MS. is our only written authority for the event; although there is a mass of oral tradition bearing on the incident, stray echoes of which may still be heard in Raasay, and possibly in Waternish as well. That celebrated warrior and poet of Clan Donald, Do'ull Mac Iain 'ic Sheumais, the first of the MacDonalds of Kingsborough, thus refers to it in a fragment of an "iorram," or rowing-song:

" 'N tulgadh so gu Eilean Iosaidh,
Far 'n d' rinn MacLeòid an dinear,
Far 'n d' rinn MacAilein dìobairt;
Dhoirt e fuil, 's gu'n chaisg e ìotadh."

As a result of the disputes that tore the island of Lewis asunder, owing to the rival claims of the three Torquils, sons of Roderick, the last chief, the king granted a charter in 1572 to the oldest of the claimants, Torquil Connanach; and in this deed it is expressly stated that, failing heirs to the assignee, the estates were to devolve on the oldest representative of the MacLeods of Raasay. It was probably in the previous year that young Malcolm, the foster-son of Malcolm MacNeil, and son of Alexander, the last chief, assumed the leadership of his clan. There is extant an account of the island written in 1577, that falls therefore during the period of his suzerainty. "Raasay," it runs, "perteins to the Bishop of the Isles, but it is occupied and possessed by a gentleman of MacLoyd Lewis kin, called Gilliechallum Raarsa. He has ane castil called Prokill. It (Raasay) is eight markland, and will raise eight hundred men. It pays yearly to the Bishop of the Isles sixteen marks, and to the captain thereof sundry tributes better than five hundred marks. There are no woods, but high crags. It is commodious for corn and all kinds of bestial, especially horses."

Like many another chief of that age, Malcolm, third of Raasay, seems to have been remiss in the payment of his dues to the Church; for, in the year 1580, when an action was brought by the Bishop of the Isles against those who had failed to meet their ecclesiastical obligations, mention is made of Malcolm MacGilliechallum of Raasay, with Norman MacLeod "of Harris," and Donald Gorm of Sleat. "They had intromitted with mailes, fermes, teinds, and dewties perteining and belonging to the Bishop of the Isles, each of them for their own part of crops, in the years of God 1572, 1573, and divers uther years."

The young Chief of Raasay appears to have been a man of many parts. He was a bard; but all that is now extant of his works is represented by a fragment that has been preserved in the Fernaig MS. It consists of five verses of an elegy recounting the transience of worldly things:

" A shaoghail is diomhain do mhuirn,
'S mairg a shaothair le ' droigh quirmb,' *
An triuir bu phailt ri mo rè
Ni air mhaireann duibh ach an ath sgeul.

" Nis bho chaidh an triuir sin seachad
'S gun bhith ann neach ri taobhadh,
Ach iad mar ghiomaich am faiche,
'S ro-bheag mo thoirt ort, a shaoghail."

Like other members of his line, he was noted for his princely generosity, and we find that he is styled "an t-slat fhial" by Alasdair MacMhurchaidh, a famous bard of Kintail, who flourished about the middle of the seventeenth century. This chief was a skilful diplomat, and a mighty warrior as well. In 1588 he took a prominent part in a memorable incursion made into Caithness by

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* Droch Chuirm.

a force composed of Macintoshes, Mackays, Munros, and the MacLeods of Assynt. All these clans were the allies of the Earl of Sutherland, who had received a "commission of fire and sword" against the Earl of Caithness for the murder by the latter of George Gordon, who, by way of insult, had cut the tails off the Earl's horses. On the approach of this formidable array, the men of Caithness fled to the north, ruthlessly pursued by the invaders. Much booty was taken, the event being accordingly called "Latha na Creich Mhóire," or the "Day of the Big Foray." "A great prey of catell and goods was taken away," writes Robert Gordon in his "History of Sutherland," "the lyk whereof was not sein in that countrey for many yeirs; all which spoil was divyded among the army according to the rites and customs then used in such cases"; and he appends the reflection, "Thus do we alwise see the poor and common sorte of people to suffer for great men's follies." And suffer the people did; for the town of Wick was besieged and sacked, while, in the rage for devastation, it was proposed by some that the church be given to the flames. Wiser counsels, fortunately, prevailed to prevent that act of sacrilege. Some of the more ardent raiders, however, burst into the sacred building, mention being made of MacGilliechalum of Raasay and his son, John. According to Robert Gordon, the latter found a case of lead containing the ashes of the heart of one of the Earls of Caithness, "the ashes of which heart was throwne with the wind by John Mack Gil Chalm Rasey."

Few in that age were more accomplished raiders than the men of Raasay. They were skilful seamen, the geographical advantages they enjoyed in their situation, between Skye and the mainland, making it an easy matter for them to carry on their depredations. Hence they were always in the foray, often with their chief at their head; and despite many threats and denunciations by those in authority, and frequent sentences of "putting to the horn," they could not be suppressed. In 1592 it is stated that MacGilliechallum of Raasay had been "released from the horn for any cause bygone"; but this act of clemency could not win his restless clansmen over from the thrilling sport of rieving. Indeed, in the following year they had carried out a most successful raid on the lands of Alexander Bane of Tulloch, when, in the month of

September, "MacGilliechallum Rasa, John his son, Alexander Ley, Andrew Ley, Angus Pyper, Hucheon Mac In Glas, Alexander Mac Iain 'ic Rory, John Mac William Dow (surnames as we know them now were then seldom in use), with their accomplices, broken men, and sorners, stole 240 cows, 500 sheep, 200 goats, and 20 horses; and they had often committed such acts." In 1594 they were summoned to appear before the Privy Council in order to answer this charge of "rief"; but, as usual, they did not comply. The ceremony of putting them "to the horn" inevitably followed, MacGilliechalum and his accomplices being declared rebels.

But the sentence of outlawry was soon to be revoked. A full pardon was extended to the clan, while on 10th July, 1596, a complacent sovereign conferred on their chief a charter, wherein he is described as "MacGillichalum, son and heir of Alister vic Gillichalum of the lands of Raasay, Ire," etc., all which districts are declared to have once been the rightful property of the Bishop of the Isles, but "now belonging to the king by Act of Annexation."

At this time the internal commotions in the island of Lewis had become so acute that the territory was forfeited to the Crown; and, in view of the waning fortunes of the reigning house, MacGillichalum of Raasay began to see his chances of self-aggrandisement. He tried to cultivate the friendship of powerful neighbours who might be useful in helping forward his claims. Accordingly, he entered into a bond of manrent with Donald Gorm Mor of Sleat, thus initiating a contract that was to remain inviolate for over two centuries. A ceremony associated with this undertaking was the bequeathing of his sword by the dying chief of either clan to the survivor of the other, Dr. Johnson stating that this outward sign of friendship had been observed when, on the death of Sir James MacDonald in Rome, in 1766, his sword was given to MacLeod of Raasay.

In consequence of a transaction with MacKenzie of Kintail, the cause and details of which are unknown, the lands of Raasay were resigned to that chief, who restored them again to the original possessors. This was done on the understanding that the MacLeods were to own allegiance to Lord Kintail, and were to provide a birlinn of twelve oars for the use of their superior. The charter was compiled at the Castle of Eilean Donain; and it is noteworthy that the assignation was made to "the umquhile Malcolm MacGillichalum of Rasay," indicating that that chief was then dead.

This happened in 1610, a year that is memorable in the history of the family of Raasay. The feuds between them and the MacKenzies of Gairloch, for possession of the latter district, had been waged intermittently throughout the century. At the battle of Loch an Fhéidh, in Glen Torridon, the MacKenzies inflicted so disastrous a defeat on the mainland branch of the MacLeods that the latter were forced to evacuate their estates there; and they never succeeded in regaining them. Of the principal men of the sept, one, John MacAlan MacRory, probably a grandson of "Rory the Venomous," was taken prisoner; while another, John Holmach MacRory, supposed to be the uncle of the foregoing, fled the country, and made for the island of Raasay.

In August of the following year, Murdo MacKenzie, the oldest son and heir of MacKenzie of Gairloch, with Alexander Bane of Tulloch, set sail for Skye at the head of a goodly band of warriors. According to some, their intention was to seize John Holmach, while others suggest that MacKenzie's aim was to secure the hand of the only daughter of Donald Dubh MacRuairi, who was the direct heir to the estates of Gairloch, now that John MacAlan was a prisoner and John Holmach an exile. By this union the MacKenzies hoped to gain the legal right to the district which they then held by the sword.

Whatever the motive for the expedition, and the latter is the more probable one, MacKenzie's galley was forced by stress of weather to put into Clachan Bay, where it dropped anchor opposite the site of the present mansion-house.

On hearing of the presence of the strange ship, it is said that the young laird of Raasay, "MacGillichalum Og," with twelve men, went aboard; but when MacKenzie and Alexander Bane saw who were visiting them they hid themselves below deck. By some means or another, Raasay had ascertained who were aboard, and, having bought a quantity of wine, returned home. There he held a consultation with a devoted member of the clan, one, "MacGillichalum Mor MacDho'uill 'ic Neill," a man of shrewd intelligence and gigantic strength, as to the course of action they should pursue against the young laird of Gairloch and his confederates.

MacNeil advised him to commission his brother Murdo to gather as many men as possible without delay, while MacNeil himself and a picked band of men would accompany their chief to the Gairloch galley on pretence of buying more wine; that they should then have recourse to stratagem, seize MacKenzie, and, having made him their prisoner, hold him in durance until they had succeeded in inducing his clan to have him exchanged for John MacAlan MacRuairi.

MacGillichalum Og was only too willing to embark on this project. Returning to the galley with his men in two boats, more wine was bought; and, now that MacKenzie and Bane had revealed themselves, MacLeod insisted that the whole quantity be quaffed there and then in company with the men from Gairloch. The proposal met with the hearty approval of all, while the MacLeods showed such unstinted generosity in disposing of the liquor that most of their guests were soon intoxicated; and all retired to their bunks with the exception of four who had abstained from partaking of the wine, as they were apprehensive from the beginning of sinister motives on the part of their hosts.

Seeing that MacKenzie had now been deserted by most of his men, MacLeod laid hold of him, declaring that he was a prisoner. The former, who was a powerful man, released himself, asserting he would scorn to yield to any MacLeod, and with one blow he felled the laird of Raasay. The followers of the latter, roused to fury because of the discomfiture of their chief, immediately drew their dirks. As MacKenzie was stepping backwards in order to obtain more room to wield his sword, his heel struck the gunwale of the ship, and he fell into the sea. Being a strong swimmer, he made for the peninsula of Aird, on the Skye side of the sound; but he was not allowed to go far, for the MacLeods on shore, noticing the commotion on board the Gairloch galley, put to sea, pursued the fugitive, and battered him to death with their oars.

Meanwhile the fight was proceeding in grim earnest on board the ship; and as each of the men from Gairloch, who had previously retired inebriated below the deck, tried to return to the scene of contest, he was killed by the MacLeods as soon as his head appeared in the hatchway. But the four men of the MacKenzies who had refrained from drinking were giving such a manly account of themselves, that Raasay, MacNeil, and their twelve followers were also among the slain.

Now the men from the mainland had succeeded in disposing of their enemies on board not a moment too soon; for their ship was beset on all sides by bands of resolute men of the Raasay clan. So gallantly, however, did the defenders acquit themselves, aided as they were by the comparative height of their galley, that a heavy toll was taken of the MacLeods. As more boats were rushing from shore, filled with fresh enemies, the MacKenzies, concluding that their position was becoming desperate, cut their cable, and, hoisting sail before a favourable breeze, soon outstripped their pursuers, and reached Gairloch in safety.

In referring to this incident, Sir Robert Gordon, author of "A History of Sutherland," written in 1630, says: "In August, 1611, there happened an accident in the ile of Rosay, wher Gilcalme, laird of that iland, and Murthow Mackenzie (the laird of Garlogh his sone), wer slain with divers others." The brief career of "Gillechalum Og," the fourth chief of Raasay, was thus cut short in the fight in Clachan Bay; and the succession devolved on a boy named Alexander, whose name is mentioned in a deed of gift by the King in 1617, to Andrew, Bishop of the Isles, of all sums owing to his majesty by the chiefs of Skye and "Alexander MacGillichalum of Raasay." In that year King James VI., after the Act of Annexation of all the ecclesiastical properties of the realm, "gave, and set free, to the umquhile Malcolm MacGilliechalum, father of the said Alexander, heritably the whole lands of Raasay, extending to eight merklands of old extent, and also the lands of Ire, Tottua, Carrabost, Ware, Sallader, Vinsinort (these are, of course, in Snizort), extending to three merklands, and all and sundry the fortalices, on condition of payment to the Bishop of the Isles of twenty-four marks of old duty and £1 13s 4d of new augmentation"; and he is further obliged to make provision for the king, or his representative, when either happened to come to his territory.

Again, in the year 1628, his name appears appended to a document drawn up and signed at Duntulm by the chiefs of Skye, Sir Donald MacDonald, John MacLeod, and Sir Lachlan

Mackinnon, together with Seaforth, when they bind themselves to do all in their power to preserve the deer and the roe on their estates, and to punish all who might be guilty of poaching.

This chief lived till about 1643. He was married to a daughter of John MacLeod, second of Drynoch, and they had two sons, Alexander, his heir, and John, whose descendants carried on the succession on the death of the seventh chief, Iain Garbh.

Alexander, the sixth chief of Raasay, was married to Sibella, daughter of Mackenzie, the first of his line in Applecross; by her he is said to have had one son, Iain Garbh, his heir, and two daughters, Janet and Julia; though Màiri ni'n Alasdair Ruaidh states, in her lament on the death of Iain Garbh, that there was another son:

> "B'e sgeul cràiteach do'n mhnaoi a dh' fhàg thu,
> 'S do t'aon bhràthair a shuidh 'na t-àite;
> Diluain Càisge chaidh tonn bàit' ort,
> Craobh a b' àird' de'n abhal thu."

The older of the daughters was married to Duncan MacRae of Inverinate (Donnacha nam Pìos), the compiler of the Fernaig M.S., and the younger died unmarried.

Iain Garbh succeeded his father on 20th August, 1648. He was married to Janet, daughter of the celebrated Sir Rory Mor of Dunvegan; and he was considered to be the strongest as well as the most handsome man of his age. Màiri ni'n Alasdair Ruaidh sings his praises in her lament:

> "Bu tu 'm fear curanta mòr,
> Bu mhath cumadh, is treòir,
> 'O d' uillinn gu d' dhòrn,
> 'O d' mhullach gu d' bhròig.
> Mhic Mhuire mo leòn,
> Thu bhi 'n innis nan ròn,
> 'S nach fhaighear thu."

This popular chief met his death by drowning as he was on his way home from Lewis, where he had been attending a christening in the family of Seaforth. Off the north-east coast of Skye his galley was overtaken by a gale so wild that the ship foundered, and all aboard were lost. The sennachie, with his characteristic disposition to hyperbole, still refers to the severity of that storm when "the waves rose high as the Coolins, and the boulders of Mol Stamhain were hurled far above the shore cliffs and deposited on dry land."

His death was universally mourned; and, as has already been stated, Màiri ni'n Alasdair Ruaidh composed a touching lament. It is entitled "Marbhrann do Iain Garbh Mac 'Ille Chaluim Rarsaidh," and is written in the best strain of that wonderful poetess. Her equally famous contemporary, Pàdruig Mór MacCrimmon, gave expression to his grief in that epic piobaireachd, "Iain Garbh Mac 'Ille Chaluim," that is rightly considered by the masters of our classic music to be at once the loftiest and the most soul-subduing melody of its kind.

In Raasay there is a tradition to the effect that, on every recurring Friday, for the space of a whole year, one of his sisters, Janet, composed and sang a new lament to his memory, and that of these only one has been preserved. This is said to be "The Raasay Lament," " 'S mi'm Shuidh air an Fhaoilinn," an elegy throughout which runs the note of poignant sorrow, and is characterised at the same time by that wealth of imagery which stamps the composition as the work of a great genius. The last verse is:

" 'Nochd is iosal do chluasag
Air leacann fuara na tuinne.
'S ann an clachan, gun tràghadh,
Tha mo ghràdhsa air uiridh."

Tradition declares that this renowned chief was drowned at the early age of twenty-one years; but in consideration of the following facts we are forced to question that assertion. We know that he was served heir to his father in 1648; and there is extant a bond signed on the 10th March, 1661, by "John MacLeod of Raasay," in conjunction with Sir James MacDonald of Sleat, Colonel Roderick MacLeod of Talisker, and Lachlan Mackinnon of Strath, in which they undertake to repay a sum of 4000 merks to Sir Robert Farquhar of Meanie, who had lent that amount to MacLeod of Assynt. Again, in 1688, it is recorded that his sisters, Janet and Julia, were served "heirs of line, conquest, and provision" to their father, "Alexander MacLeod, alias MacAlaster vic Gillichalum . . . in the lands of Raasay," including the towns, lands, islands, and liegrassings of Kilmiluach, Ausach, Balliechurn, Balliemeanach, Invervig, Glam, Moisnes, Crochill, with the pertinents of Sciepadell, Hallag, Leaghk, Kamiorich, Liebost, Slagadine, Slachro, Fearne, Stair, Ire, Shuashnesmore, Shuashnesbeg, Inneraross, Boradell, Glen, Kylehan, and the two islands commonly called Rona and Fladda, together with Ire, Tott, Carobost, Glengrast, Ugisarder, Knockshint, Penniemore, Penniecappan, in the barony of Trotarnish, and in the other towns, lands, islands, and others of Fortuna Rasaye, in the parish of Snizort." (Even as late as 1790 the annual rental of the lands of Raasay in Snizort amounted to £140.) In the same records ("The Retours") there occurs a puzzling statement to the effect that in the year 1630 lands, which appear to be identical with several of those quoted above, had been granted to "Alexander M'Leane MacFerquhard MacEachan, in the lands of Rasey, viz., Clachan, Oistage, Innervig, Clam, Maenes, Browkill, Awoynes, Phladda, Ronnha, Skrebidell, Halleg, Larg, Lebost, Naseiring, Lagan, Achositore, Ire, Swysnes, Inneraros, Borrodaill, Ramisdall, extending to eight merklands, and in the lands of Ire, Tuych, Carrabost, and Wygsadder in Troternish to the extent of three merklands."

The successor of Iain Garbh, as chief, was his cousin, Alexander, son of John, brother of Alexander the sixth of Raasay. According to Sir Robert Douglas, in "The Baronage of Scotland," this chief obtained from his cousins, Janet and Julia, who are described as "heirs of line," a resignation of all the family estates in his own favour; and he was duly infeft in these lands by charter, dated August, 1692.

Alexander was married to Catherine, the daughter of the famous warrior, Sir Norman of Bernera. There were two sons of the marriage, Malcolm, the heir, and John, designated "of Rigg." Little is known of this chief. He is probably the one referred to by Martin Martin in his "Description of the Western Isles," as follows: "Mackleod is a cadet of the family of that name. His seat is in the village, Clachan. The inhabitants have as great veneration for him as any subjects can have for their king." A member of this family is referred to as having played a distinguished part in the War of the Spanish Succession. He was Colonel Aeneas MacLeod, a trusted officer under the Duke of Marlborough.

The succeeding Chief of Raasay was Malcolm, the ninth of his line. He was married to Mary, daughter of Alexander MacKenzie of Applecross, by whom he had three sons, John, his successor, Dr. Murdoch of Eyre, and Norman, who was an officer in the pay of the States General, and is mentioned as having been living in retirement at Eyre with Dr. Murdoch, when Dr. Johnson and Boswell visited him in 1773. There was also a daughter, who was married, as second wife, to John Dubh Mackinnon, chief of Strath.

In addition to those children born of wedlock, this chief had eight others, the progeny of an irregular union with a clansman's daughter, Janet MacLeod, or, as she is locally referred to, "Bantighearna Dhubh Osgaig." The most notable of her children was the Rev. Malcolm MacLeod (Maighsteir Calum), who was minister of Snizort until his death in 1832, and was the father of the famous "Mr. Roderick."

The chief lived during the stirring times of "The '45," and, being an ardent loyalist, he was early eager to join the rebellion. His desires were not, however, to be realised so soon as he would have wished, owing to the vacillating attitude of the other chiefs of Skye to the cause of Prince Charlie. His conference with Sir Alexander MacDonald at Sconser has already been alluded to; and when he discovered that that chief was no longer disposed to throw in his lot with the Jacobites he decided to act alone.

After having, as a precautionary measure, conveyed the estates to his oldest son, whom he persuaded to remain at home, he mustered one hundred men of his clan, and, with his second son, Dr. Murdoch of Eyre, and his nephew, Captain Malcolm MacLeod of Brae, made for the south in November, 1745. Having joined the men of Clanranald, to whose chief MacGillichalum's mother was married as her second husband, they met the Prince at Stirling on his retreat to the north. They were present at Falkirk, where the fading fortunes of the Jacobites enjoyed a temporary revival; and, with the rest of the Highland army, they suffered defeat on Culloden. Thence they returned home, all except fourteen of them, who had fallen in the rebellion. Dr. Murdoch of Eyre was wounded on Culloden, a bullet entering one shoulder and lodging in the other.

Shortly after the return of the MacLeods to Raasay, the search for the chief became so keen that he was constrained to leave his own country and seek safety in the wilds of Knoidart. As soon, however, as he heard that the Prince had landed on his island, he returned, in the hope that he might be able to help the royal fugitive. His galley met that of Mackinnon of Strath as the latter was conveying Prince Charlie from Elgol to Morar; but "they evaded each other, as they were both apprehensive of danger."

Now, when the intelligence was brought to the forces of the government that a contingent from Raasay had set out to join the Prince, measures were immediately taken to harass their lands. Thus it happened that a certain Captain Hay, who commanded a government tender, landed on the island of Rona a party which indulged in an indiscriminate slaughter of all the cattle there. Thence they proceeded to the north end of Raasay, where "they plundered two or three small townships."

About the middle of May, 1746, the ruthless Captain Ferguson invaded the island, despatching a party on shore under the command of a Lieut. Dalrymple. The work of devastation was then resumed with unbridled vindictiveness. The chief's residence at Clachan was burned to the ground, after the windows and the most precious part of the plenishing had been taken possession of by the soldiery. When an entry had been effected, prior to the burning of the house, it was seen that the plate and some of the furniture had been removed; and, according to "The Lyon in Mourning," a former servant, a young lad, who was captured by the destroyers, was forced to betray where the household goods were hidden, "in a cave about a quarter of a mile from the house." All the other houses on the island, with the exception of those in two townships that had escaped the observation of the Hanoverian troops, were similarly consigned to the flames.

On his return from Knoidart, the chief, with his two sons, John and Dr. Murdoch, his nephew, Captain Malcolm of Brae, and five clansmen, went in hiding to the island of Rona. Thence Captain Malcolm set off for Kingsborough, in order to acquaint the MacDonalds with the news of the escape of the Prince from Skye; but, finding "all the tracks beset with soldiers," he deemed it prudent not to proceed. On his return to Raasay, he found that the island was once again overrun by the Militia, who were feverishly searching for the chief, as news of his return had got abroad.

This visitation had been organised in a very thorough manner. A Captain Scott was in command, and a landing was effected first in Rona, where the chief was known to be in hiding. In their endeavour to obtain news of him, the party tried to coerce the people to turn informers. With that end in view, it is said, they lashed two men in Rona so that one died, and the other had not recovered from the punishment when the account of the atrocity was given to Bishop Forbes, two years later.

Foiled in their search in Rona, the invaders then invaded Raasay. There they exacted a terrible revenge on the people. According to an estimate given to Bishop Forbes of the damage that was wrought, it is stated that upwards of two hundred and eighty cows and seven hundred sheep were killed, in addition to several horses that were "shot for pleasure." Over three hundred houses were burned down, the growing crops were destroyed, and thirty-two boats, great and small, were set on fire. On the intercession of Sir Alexander MacDonald, one boat was left for young Raasay, another having been concealed in a cove by Captain Malcolm of Brae; but both were afterwards taken to Lochindal by command of the Earl of Loudon.

According to a contemporary computation, there were one hundred and twenty families in Raasay at that time; and their suffering must have been appalling, deprived as they were of all their stock, and their crops ruined. And the lands of the Raasay MacLeods in Skye did not escape. So terrible, indeed, was the devastation wrought there, that families were forced to evacuate their homes, fleeing to the neighbouring districts and leaving waste their own lands "as they are to this day" (1748).

On his return from Skye, after his activities in connection with the escape of the Prince, Captain Malcolm of Brae was one day observed by some soldiers, who, mistaking him for the chief, had him forthwith closely watched. For a night or two he lived in the open, occasionally changing his place of concealment; until one morning he was discovered by a band of the Militia. Being swift of foot, he succeeded in breaking clear, and made for "the top of the island." On the way he encountered a party of between fifty and sixty men, under Captain Scott. His speed, and his knowledge of the terrain, however, saved him; while a man, Donald Nicolson, who accompanied him, was taken, and rigorously interrogated as to his knowledge of the Prince's wanderings, and the place of concealment of his chief. The loyal fellow, refusing to give any information, was tortured so savagely by the soldiers that "he was left for dead."

That night Malcolm made for a cave in the left bank of Inver Burn, known locally as "Uamha Catriona Duibhe." There, with only "a few crumbs of bread and cheese" in his pockets, he spent three days and nights. Desperate with hunger, he left his hiding-place to seek food and shelter in the house of a relative, Murdo MacLeod, who lived in Brae. Early the following morning, while he was still sleeping, the soldiers were seen approaching by the lady of the house. She immediately raised the alarm, and Malcolm had just succeeded in making his escape when the house was surrounded. He made for his retreat, and although closely pursued, and once or twice fired upon, he managed to reach it in safety. Near the cave he met a boy, whom he coerced to follow him, lest the lad, falling into the hands of the enemy, should betray his place of concealment. Three more nights and days dragged wearily on in the cave, until he was finally forced to let the famishing youth go free. The net had meanwhile been tightened around the districts of Inver and Brae, so that it was impossible for anyone to be abroad without being seen by the soldiers. On leaving the cave, the boy promised he would return with food; but he had barely gone half a mile when he was captured, and compelled to tell all he knew.

That evening, as Malcolm was cautiously looking about him, in the failing light, he noticed on a rock above his cave a small band of soldiers, who covered him with their muskets. There was now no course open to him but to surrender, and he was taken before MacLeod of Talisker, whose soldiers had effected his capture. Without ado, he was whisked off to Portree, where he was kept in close confinement in a guardhouse for two days, with Donald MacLeod of Galtrigill as his fellow-prisoner.

From Portree they were sent to Applecross Bay, where General Campbell was known to be on board "The Furnace." So long as the General remained with the ship, the prisoners were treated with humanity; but once he left they were exposed to the tyrannies of Captain Ferguson, "one of the most barbarous men ever set loose on the Highlands." For weeks "The Furnace" cruised about the Hebrides, a floating prison-house, the sufferings of the captives being cruel in the extreme. Early in the evening they were forced below decks; and, as no beds were provided, they were obliged to lie on coils of rope and on the stones used as ballast. Their rations were inadequate—they had to subsist on half the amount given to the mariners; while the food was always stale, and often decomposed. During the whole time they were on board they were given no change of garments, and Malcolm "had not one shirt to change another."

It was thought by his captors that he was the chief, and he did what he could to confirm them in their delusion; for he knew that so long as that belief was held the island of Raasay would be free from further molestation. Hence it was that, when preparations for his court-martial were being made in London, the evidence against him was found to be perplexingly conflictory. Many a ruse was tried in order to procure information against him. People would visit him, professing to be his friends; one of these paid informers, a man of the name of Urquhart, he found most difficult to dispose of, owing to his pertinacity. This person posed as a Jacobite, talking much about the exploits he had had in Edinburgh and at Inverness in the company of the men from Raasay; but Malcolm "kept him off with long weapons and discreet returns."

The most reliable clue the officials of the government possessed for the identification of the Chief of Raasay was that he was bow-legged and "hen"-toed, whereas Malcolm's legs were discovered, on examination, "to be straight and stout." (The credulous may find in this physical deformity of MacGillechalum, together with his frequent breaches of the Moral Law, as expressed in the seventh commandment, the fulfilment of that famous prophecy, attributed to "Coinneach Odhar," the "Brahan Seer":

"'Nuair a thig MacDhò'uill Dhuibh, bàn,
MacShimidh ceann-ruadh,
Siosalach claon, ruadh,
MacCoinnich mór, bodhar, agus
MacGillechalum camachasach,
Iar ogha Iain Bhig a Rig,
Is e sin MacGillechalum
Is miosa thàinig, no thig."

The only snag in the prediction is this; MacGillechalum was the brother, and not the great-grandson, of John, the First of Rigg, who was the father of Captain Malcolm of Brae.)

Despite the fact that no incriminating evidence could be obtained against him, Malcolm was kept in detention until the passing of the Amnesty Act, on the 4th of July, 1747. Through the activities of Jacobite enthusiasts, a subscription was raised for him in London, and a means of conveyance thus procured for him and for Flora MacDonald, who was set free on the same day. It was considered by the friends of the latter that Captain Malcolm would make an excellent escort for Flora; and they travelled north under the sobriquets of "Mr. and Miss Robertson," in order to evade the attentions of the curious. Thus it was that Malcolm was wont afterwards to observe: "I was taken to London to be hanged; but I was sent back in a post-chaise with Flora MacDonald."

There was great enthusiasm among his clansmen on his safe return. Shortly afterwards he received a letter from Bishop Forbes, from which one may infer the large amount of havoc that had been wrought in Raasay by the soldiers of the king. In his note the Bishop says: "I congratulate you on your safe return to your own place—I wish I could say to your own fireside. But I hope that that and all other losses will be made up to you with interest in due time."

Captain Malcolm occupied that district of Raasay which is situated to the south of Balmeanach, and to the east of Holoman. He is accordingly designated "Malcolm MacLeod of Brae." When Dr. Johnson and Boswell were touring in the Highlands, Captain Malcolm, as the representative of his chief, went to Corry, in Strath, in order to escort the famous literati to the island of Raasay. They were ferried thither in "a good, strong, open boat, made in Norway," Malcolm, as helmsman, singing the while for the benefit of the oarsmen, and to the delectation of his guests, the well-known Jacobite song, "Tha Tighinn Fodham Eirigh," the whole company, with the Rev. Dr. Donald MacQueen, taking up the refrain.

Malcolm was then sixty-two years of age, and he is described by Boswell as follows: " He was hale and well-proportioned, with a manly countenance, tanned by the weather, yet having a ruddiness in his cheeks, over a great part of which his rough beard extended. His eye was quick and lively, yet his look was not fierce; but he appeared at once firm and good humoured. He wore a pair of brogues, tartan hose which came up only near to his knees and left them bare, a purple camblet kilt, a black waistcoat, a short green cloth coat bound with gold cord, a yellowish bushy wig, a large blue bonnet with a gold-thread button. I never saw a figure that gave a more perfect representation of a Highland gentleman. I wished much to have a picture of him just as he was. I found him frank and polite in the true sense of the word.''

In addition to his many other qualities of body and mind, Captain Malcolm was an excellent exponent of pipe-music, and a noted composer as well. The best known of his works is ''Fàilte Phrionnsa,'' composed by him shortly after his release from prison.

He was the oldest son of John of Rigg, brother of ''Calum Camachasach,'' the chief of ''The '45.'' He was born in 1711, and, as he died unmarried, the territorial designation ''of Rigg'' passed to his brother, Norman, who is known in the history of Skye as the father of two eminent men—Captain Norman of Camustinivaig, and Captain John of Ollach, both of whom had distinguished careers as officers in the British Army during the American War of Independence.

We have seen that, prior to his participation in the rebellion of 1745, the Chief of Raasay conveyed his estates to his son, in order to guard against their alienation from the family in case of defeat. The heir was an ardent Jacobite, and, as previously shown, played an active part in the escape of Prince Charlie. When he was advised by Captain Malcolm to avoid the Prince, as the latter was being taken to Raasay, he characteristically replied that he was proud to get the opportunity of giving what small service he could to the Jacobite cause, and that he would render it even although it should cost him his head.

This man was afterwards John, the tenth of Raasay. He was married to Jane, daughter of MacQueen of Totarome, and they had a large family of three sons and ten daughters. It was during his chiefship that Dr. Johnson paid his visit to the island in 1773. The impression made on the famous litterateur by the manner of his reception in Raasay is worth re-quoting: ''Such a seat of hospitality amid the winds and the waters fills the imagination with a delightful contrariety of images. Without is the rough ocean and the rocky land, the beating billows, and the howling storm;

within is plenty and elegance, beauty and gaiety, the song and the dance. In Raasay, if I could have found a Ulysses, I had fancied a Phaeacia.''

Boswell, too, gives an illuminating account of Raasay at that time. He observes that the island was comfortably self-supporting, for there was ''abundance of black cattle, sheep, and goats.'' Many horses also were reared, and they were employed in the customary operations of agriculture. They were, however, seldom used as beasts of burden, for there were, of course, no roads on the island then; and, as most of the houses were built close to the shore, the carriage of goods was done chiefly by sea. Fishing was plentiful, crops flourished. ''Rasay,'' he says, ''is a place where one may live in plenty, even in luxury.'' There was a great variety of game, and plenty of it—grouse, pigeons, and ''blackcock in extraordinary abundance''; but there were no deer, hares, or rabbits.

Like Dr. Johnson, Boswell pays a high tribute to the laird. ''Rasay,'' he says, ''has the true spirit of a chief. He is, without exaggeration, a father to his people; and so far is he from distressing his clan that, in the present rage for emigration, not a man has left his estate.''

MacLeod ''registered arms'' in 1779. These consist principally of a burning mountain; the crest, which is ''the sun in its splendour''; supporters, two savages with flames on heads and hands each standing on a burning mound, and the motto, ''Luceo non Uro'' (I shine, but do not burn). The badge is the red whortleberry (Lus nan Cnaisheag), which is found in abundance in Raasay. His letters to Dr. Johnson, and to Boswell, mark him as a man of cultivated taste and of sober judgment; while his wife must have been a woman of considerable ability and great commonsense to have prepared her many daughters for the high positions that were later to be occupied by some of them in society.

We need not wonder, then, at Johnson's observation on the amenities of life, and especially on the domestic felicities, in the household of Raasay: ''More gentleness of manners, or a more pleasing appearance of domestic society, is not found in the most polished countries.''

Of their daughters, the celebrated Miss Flora was one of the most handsome women, and perhaps the greatest beauty of her age in the Highlands. She was married to the Earl of Loudon; but she died soon after the birth of a daughter, also called Flora, who became the wife of the Marquis of Hastings, a Governor-General of India.

Another daughter, Margaret, was married to Martin Martin of Bealach, a man of pleasing address, and still remembered in Skye for his phenomenal strength.

The second daughter, Isabella, became the wife of a Major Ross of the Royal Artillery; and one of their daughters, Elizabeth, was married, as his second wife, to the famous artist, Sir Charles D'Oyly, whom she met in India while living there with her cousin, the Marchioness of Hastings. On her return from India, Lady D'Oyly brought with her an elegant set of pipes, which she presented to the celebrated piper of the family, Angus Mackay, the son of "Pìobaire Dall," who composed the well-known tune, "Lady D'Oyly's Salute."

Lady D'Oyly was a poetess of considerable power and lofty taste. Of her compositions the best known is the breezy, yet easy-flowing love-song, "Thainig an Gille Dubh" (The Raasay Love Lilt). The aptness of its imagery, its faultless rhyme, and the harmony of its assonance, are a delight to the mind and to the ear alike. Two quatrains are quoted:

"Gur guirme do shùil
Na'n dearcag fo'n driùchd,
'S gur finealt do ghnùis
Na ùr-ròs mheanganan.

"Ged bhitheadh a' ghaoth
Ri sgoltadh nan craobh,
Gu'n cumadh mo ghaol
A taobh 's na marannan."

Another of her songs is "Oran do'n Eilthireach," in which the exile yearns for—

"O Ghàidhealtachd ghaolach,
Nan cladach, 's na faoileann,
Nan innis, 's nan aonach uain?"

In addition to "Cumha Mhic Leoid" and "Oran do Phrionnsa Tearlach," she composed another love-lyric, "Mo rùn air mo Leannan," in which she sings:

"Is math thig air mo ghràdhsa
Cota grinn air dhath sgàrlaid
'S ann aig tha 'n cul faineach
Is bòidhche.

Suil mheanmnach, chiuin mheallach,
Nach feargach a sealladh,
'S bu dearbh thu ri d' ghealladh
An còmhnuidh."

For pictorial effect, another of her amatory compositions, "Oran Gaoil," can compare with anything in our language:

"Tha sùil mo rùin-sa gu meallach ciùine,
'S mar dhearcag dhù-ghorm fo dhriùchd a' fàs;
Mar ghrian ag éirigh moch maduinn chéitein
Tha sealladh m' eudail gu h-éibhinn tlàth.
Do dheud cho dìreach fo bhilibh mìn-dhearg,
Am beul na fìrinn fo 'm mìlse fàilt;
Chan iarrainn sùgradh ach pog bho chùr'-bheul,
Co riamh thug sùil ort, 's a dhùilt dhut gràdh?"

Lady D'Oyly died on the 1st of July, 1875.

Of the sons of John, the tenth chief, the second, John, died young; the third, Malcolm, was a captain in the Indian Army, and the oldest was James, the heir, and successor.

Some time after the accession of this, the eleventh Chief of Raasay, the menace of Napoleon was felt even in Skye, there being much talk of a French invasion. In the attempt to meet such a contingency, a regiment of volunteers was formed in 1803, and there was eager enthusiasm to join it. It was commanded jointly by James MacLeod of Raasay and James MacDonald of Lyndale, by James MacLeod of Raasay and James MacDonald of Lyndale; but, as already stated, the necessity for its continuance being obviated by the victories of Nelson, it was disbanded in 1807.

This chief initiated schemes with a view to improving the amenities of the island, making large additions to the mansion-house—a work which proved so costly that the estate was sunk deeply in debt. He died in 1824, when he was succeeded by his son, John, who was married to a daughter of that famous soldier of Skye, General Sir Donald MacLeod, the son of MacLeod of Bharkasaig. They had an only daughter, who died young.

As all efforts to relieve the weight of debt on the estate proved unavailing, the creditors were reluctantly constrained to sell it. In 1846 the historic family of Clann 'ic Gille Chaluim severed their connection with their lands in Raasay and in Rona; and John, the twelfth and last of his line, emigrated to Australia.

The new proprietor was a Mr. Rainy from Edinburgh, and the period of his tenure will long be remembered on the island. It was then that many districts were ruthlessly cleared of their inhabitants to make room for sheep. Ninety-four families, resident in twelve townships, namely, Suishnish, Eyre, Upper Fearns, Lower Fearns, Upper Hallaig and Lower Hallaig, North and South Screapadale, Castle, Manish, and Doire Dhomhain, were dispossessed of their lands between the years 1852 and 1854, while on the 6th of May of the latter year as many as 129 were shipped to Australia; and, as the Rev. Mr. Galbraith observed in his testimony before the Crofters' Commission in 1883, "by far the greater number of these were sent away against their will."

Mr. Rainy was succeeded by his son, who was prepared to do all in his power for the comfort of the people; but his promising career was cut short by death in 1872, when the property was sold to Mr. G. G. Mackay, a man whose sole aim was to make pecuniary gain by the purchase. This gentleman disposed of the island about three years later to Mr. Armitage, a humane man, who sold it eighteen months afterwards, "at a fancy price," to Mr. Wood. The new proprietor was an enthusiastic sportsman, wholly bent on converting the island into a game preserve. The deer were carefully protected, some 2000 pheasants were annually reared, while the stock of rabbits had increased to such an enormous extent that, according to the Rev. Mr. Galbraith, as many as 14,000 were killed yearly by the company of eight gamekeepers then employed on the island. The home-farm was well developed; and about 1880 it carried a stock of 3,000 sheep; and for the accommodation of the farm workers a small township was formed at Osgaig. Good slated houses were there erected, each occupier paying the exorbitant rent of £10, in addition to an assessment of £3 for an acre of ground attached to his dwelling.

The Woods remained in possession of Raasay and Rona until the year 1912, when the islands were bought by Messrs. Baird & Co., the ironmasters of Coatbridge. In 1922, while still retaining the valuable mineral rights, that company sold their property to the Board of Agriculture for Scotland.

Brochel Castle.

This interesting ruin, perched on the top of a lofty mound on the east of Raasay, occupies what is perhaps a stronger position than that of any other castle-fort in the Western Isles. The very unique eminence on which it is reared is an outlier of Torridonian conglomerate mainly composed of littoral deposits. Rising sheer above the rocks of the shore, it presents an unscalable front on all sides from the land; while its only doorway, which is on the seaward side, is so difficult of approach as to have rendered it impregnable in its day.

Like all our ancient castles, it is built on no conceivable ground-plan, but follows the configuration of its site, occupying every corner of it. It seems to have been three storeys in height, and a striking feature of its walls is the smallness of the stones of which they are constructed, corner-stones and lintels alone being of a large size.

The fort is said by tradition to have belonged to the MacSweens, possessors of the Lewis before the MacLeods, whose chief, Malcolm, ninth of his line, ceded Raasay and other portions of his dominions to his second son, also named Malcolm, in the year 1510. When Sir Donald Monro, Dean of the Isles, toured his diocese in 1549, he made mention of this castle under the name of "Prolokit," where "was a fair orchard." It was a convenient seat for the MacLeods so long as they held Coigeach and Gairloch as well as Raasay and Rona. When, however, they were expelled from their possessions on the mainland after their defeat at Loch an Fhéidh in Glen Torridon in 1610, the family residence was changed from Brochel, with its exposed anchorage, to Clachan, on the western seaboard of the island.

Alexander Campbell, schoolmaster, and subsequently parish minister of Portree at the beginning of the eighteenth century, states that the last chief of the MacLeods to occupy Brochel Castle was the famous warrior, Iain Garbh, who was drowned off Staffin in 1688. The same writer declares that it was a place of considerable size, being capable of "accommodating 800 persons." He adds that in the courtyard was a spring of water, fed probably by an artificial channel, traces of which may still be seen running from the hill on the west. The last of the roof collapsed about 1780, the oak joists being still visible when the account already quoted was published in 1795.

INDEX.

Achadh na Fala, 50.
Achadh nam Bard, 134.
Achnahanaid, 384.
Achtaleathan, 367.
Adamnan, 6, 9, 14, 15, 16.
Afghan War, 364.
Agriculture, 146, 178, 181, 186, 310, 311, 314, 315, 316, 394, 395.
" Agus Ho Mhorag," 425.
Airdiceolain, 43.
Aird (Braes), 440.
Aireach Liath nam Bo, 111, 112.
Albermarle, Lord, 249.
Alder, 341.
Ale, 185.
Allt a'Chuain, 236.
Allan Dall, 383.
American War of Independence, 202, 203, 247, 286, 296, 297, 337, 409.
Ammonites, 277, 322.
Animal Therapeutics, 321, 322.
Annishader, 238.
Applecross Bay, 232.
Archery, 102, 132.
Archibald the Clerk (Gillesbuic Cléireach) 57, 58, 80, 84, 94, 122.
Arco Bronmhor, 12.
Ardmore, 72, 210.
Ardnish, 198.
Ardvasar, 399, 400.
Aricharnach, 242, 387.
Arisaid, 103, 191, 257.
Arkaig, Loch, 231.
Armada, 183.
Armadale, 93, 151, 165, 167, 214, 238, 286.
Armadale Castle, 350.
Armitage, Mr.
Armourers, 148.
Arquebus, 147.
Artbrannan, 6, 9, 14, 17.
Ashig, 17.
Assynt, St., 17.
Azalea, Trailing, 361.

Bagpipes, 137, 138, 143, 173, 175, 187, 188, 256, 265, 266, 320, 366, 367, 406, 407.
" B'annsa Cadal air Fraoch," 185.
Baintighearna Dhubh Osgaig, 324.
Baile, 20.
Ballingall, 384, 387.
Balkeson, 21, 24, 200.
" The Baliol," 247.
Balmeanach, 33, 391.
Baptists, 372.
Barilla, 297.
Barley, 146, 179, 314.
Baronesmore, 96.
" Basilikon Doron," 133.
Battle of the Braes, 388, 389, 390, 391.
Bealach, 364.
" Beannachadh Baird." 317, 325.
" Beannachadh Beothaicheadh," 172.
" Beauties of Gaelic Poetry," 153, 191, 193, 212.
Beehive Dwellings, 5.
Belemnites, 277, 322.
Beninivaig, 340.
Ben Lee, 388.
Bernisdale, 269.
Berreraig, 322.
Bethunes or Beatons, 136, 186, 275, 362.
Bethune, John, 27.
Bethune, Angus, 169.
Bethune, Rev. John, 169, 261, 325, 363.
Bethune, Rev. Kenneth, 170, 261, 323, 325, 363.
Bethune, Rev. William, 295, 299, 301, 310, 325, 332, 363, 373.
" Betty Burke," 236, 238.
Beverley, James, 329.
Birch, 100, 341.
" Bi Seumas Leam a' nochd," 427.
Black, Rev. A., 371.
Black Book of Clan Ranald, 37, 126, 127, 154, 205, 352.
Black-cock, 341, 452.
" Black Spring," 325.
Blackie, Prof., 424.
Blaikie, W. B., 242, 243.
Bland, 306.
Blar Milleadh Garaidh, 74.
Bliadhna na Peasraich, 307.
Bloody Bay, Battle of, 35, 36.
Bloomery, 6.
Bonnachd, 177.
Bord Cruinn, 211, 235.
Borlanachd, 273.
Bornaskitaig, 179, 191.
Borreraig (Duirinish), 51, 59, 95, 123, 202, 292.
Borreraig (Strath), 384, 385.
Borrodale (Arisaig), 230.
Borve, 238, 414.
Boswell, 177, 207, 217, 234, 237, 243, 247, 250, 272, 285, 289, 295, 304, 308, 309, 450, 451.
Botany, 174, 264.
Bow, 147, 176, 365.
Bracadale, 25, 42, 60, 89, 110, 133, 261, 295, 297, 368, 383, 402, 406, 415.

Braes, 12, 251, 384, 385, 388, 389, 390, 397, 414.
Brahan Seer, 449.
Brandy, 184, 270, 308.
“Brave Sons of Skye,” 360.
Breacan Féile, 22, 40, 102, 169.
“The Brilliant Feat of Arms,” 411.
“The British Ass,” 423.
Broadford, 305, 399, 400.
Brocair, 340.
Brochel Castle, 431, 434, 436, 451.
“Broken Men,” 39, 46.
Brunnal, 219.
“Bruthaichean Ghlinn Bhraoin,” 343.
Buaile, 312.
Buannachan, 70.
Buchanan, George, 133.
Burial Cairns, 5.
Burial Customs, 318.
Burt, Captain, 273.

“Cabar Féidh,” 212, 417.
Cadogan, General, 213.
Caileach Cham, 75, 104.
Cainntearachd, 201.
Caipleach, 241.
Caipstil, 260.
Caisil Chro, 189.
Calpa, 140.
Cameron, Alexander, 81.
Cameron, Rev. A., 375.
Campbell, Rev. A., 295, 299, 304, 326, 329, 332, 359, 370.
Campbell, General, 232, 236, 248, 448.
Campbeltown, 388, 403.
Camus Bàn, 397.
Camus, Castle, 32, 34, 44, 78, 79, 80, 84, 93, 105, 165.
Camustinivaig, 240, 251, 338.
Candles,
Cannon, General, 165.
Caraiste, 273.
Carbost (Minginish), 51, 377.
Carbost (Snizort), 441.
Carinish,
Carradale, 388.
Carnan Thormaid, 242.
Caroy, 226, 375.
Carpenters, 300, 301.
Carswell, Bishop, 95.
Caschrom (Crooked Spade), 146, 315.
Castle Moil or Dun Akin, 354.
Castle Tirrim, 208.
Catechism (Shorter), 170.
Cathechists, 259.
Cattle (Black), 272, 274, 297, 299, 339, 382, 396, 400, 409, 452.
Cattle-dealing, 145, 146, 147, 180.
Cattleman or Aireach, 312.
Ceann nan Creagan, 387.
Céilidh, 265, 318.
Ceol Aotrom, 201.
Ceol Mór, 201.
“Chachalaidh Dhubh,” 203.
Charity, 336.
Charles I., 126, 130.
Charles II., 149, 150, 152, 153, 169, 180. 196, 202.
Cheviot Sheep, 382, 383.
Chiefs, 267, 268, 294, 295.
Children of Keppoch, 54, 135, 147, 150, 192.
Choille Mhor, 387.
“Chomhachag,” 182.
Church Discipline, 328.
Civil War, The Great, 124, 126.
Clachan, 385, 444, 446.
Clachan Bay (Sea fight in), 439, 440. 441.
Clan System, 38.
Clann a' Phiocair Mhóir, 81.
Clark Rev. A., 202, 318, 321, 368, 374, 380, 395, 415.
“Clarsach an Doire,” 426.
Clarsair Dall, 8, 196.
Clayton, General, 213.
Clearances, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 455.
Clements St., 17.
Climate, 274, 306, 337, 335, 403.
Cnoc Phail 266.
Coal, 397.
Cogadh na Cailliche Caime, 110, 111, 113, 114.
“Coille Chaoil,” 427.
Coinneach Odhar, 449.
Coirchatachain, 308, 328, 365.
Coire nan Ceann, 50.
Coire na Creiche, 110, 111, 113, 114.
Coireach, 241.
Columba, Church of St., 91, 93.
Commissioners of Forfeited Estates, 213, 214, 216.
Congan, St., 7, 92.
Congestion, 393, 394.
Coolins, 50, 341, 425.
Corlarach, 329.
Coshering, 177.
Cottars, 302, 393, 394.
Covenanters, 149.
Cowland, 180.
Crannalaich, Battle of, 82.
“Creach nan Ciadan,” 125, 162, 196, 198.
Creag a' Chaim, 165.
Crime, 309, 310, 336.
Crofter, 20, 273, 382, 383, 394, 395, 402.
Crofters' Commission, 378, 391, 392, 393, 395, 401, 455.
Cromdale, Battle of, 165.
Cromwell, 149, 150, 155.
“Cronan,” 157, 194.
Crops, 273.
Crossal, 242.

Cruisie, 185, 301.
"Cuachag nan Craobh," 343, 349.
"Cuairtear nan Gleann," 228.
Cuid Oidhche, 100, 177.
Cuidreach, 52, 87, 112, 113, 136, 237.
Culloden, 229, 230, 235, 241, 253, 445.
Cumberland, 254.
" "Cumha a' Bhaird," 343.
"Cumha Ceann Cinnidh nan Leodach," 202.
"Cumha Eilean a' Cheo," 428.
"Cumha do mhac Leoid," 194.
"Cumha Iain Ghairbh," 194.
"Cumha Mhic Leoid," 137, 153, 155, 194, 195, 196.
"Cumha Mhic Leoid Thalascair," 199.
"Cumha na Cloinne," 202.
Customs, 19, 258.

Dalrymple's Memoirs, 268.
"Dàn Comhfhurtachd," 280.
Daoi, 39.
Darroch, Rev. John, 371.
Davoch, 46.
Dean of Lismore, 95.
Death Customs, 188, 189.
Deer, 100, 101, 148, 184, 240, 452.
Deir' Bhuana, 81.
Diet, 183, 268, 269, 275, 276, 305, 306, 307, 379.
Digging, 186.
Dirk, 176
Disarming Act, 256, 294.
Diseases, 325, 403.
Disruption, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 371, 406, 407.
"Dissertation on the Government of Western Isles," 323.
Doire Dhomhain, 455.
Donald Hearach, 46, 47.
Donald MacGhillesbuic Chleirich, 80, 93.
Donald of the Isles, 214.
Donan, Saint, 17.
Do'ull MacIain 'ic Sheumais, 86, 101, 105, 106, 108, 110, 113, 145, 147, 150, 180, 435.
Dorothy Brown, 127.
Douglas, Captain, 165.
Douglas, of Glenbervie, Sir Robt. 216. 280.
Dress, 22, 102, 190, 191, 256, 257, 302, 303, 304.
Drinking, 270, 308, 318.
Druim nan Cleoc, 52, 242.
Druimui, 238.
Drynoch, 198, 383.
Duagraich, Ben, 219.
Duirinish, 25, 29, 42, 62, 89, 92, 95, 116, 132, 168, 169, 174, 202, 209, 296, 322, 340, 376, 383, 406.
Dun Akin, 44, 356.
Dun Arkaig, 1.
Dun Beag, 1, 3, 4.
Dun Bhuirbh, 1.
Dun Borrodale, 1.
Dun Hallin, 1.
Dun Osdale, 1
Dun Sgathaich, 1, 30, 31, 32, 34, 44, 46, 47, 50, 51, 53, 79, 361.
Dun Skudaborg, 1.
Duncan Bàn, 256, 257. 303.
Dundee, Viscount, 164.
Dunnacha Mór, 140.
Dun Ringill, 356.
Duns 1.
Duntulm, 36, 43, 53, 54, 55, 57, 70, 87, 104, 108, 113, 118, 121, 142, 148, 149, 151, 175, 177, 184 190, 210, 213, 214, 441.
Dunvegan, 36, 59, 62, 63, 65, 71, 73, 102, 114, 116, 118, 121, 123, 153, 155, 157, 160, 162, 196, 198, 202, 205, 210, 224, 288, 291, 305.
Dutch Brigade, 412.
Dutch Services, 337.
Duthaich 'ic Leoid, 242.

Eagles, 241.
Ealachadh, 181.
Earraraidh, 181.
Ebost, 113, 353.
Edinbane, 353.
Education, 263, 328, 329, 413, 414, 415.
"Edsir" Louisa Maria, 351.
Eigg, Massacre of, 61, 71.
Eilean Donain, 55, 76, 77.
Eishort, Loch, Naval Skirmish in, 127, 128.
Elgol, 242, 243, 244, 252, 446.
Elliot, Capt., 380.
"Eltham," 246.
Emigration, 295, 315, 366, 382, 383, 384, 452.
Episcopalianism, 169, 171, 259, 323, 360, 375.
Erdhouses, 5.
Erskine, Ann, 217.
Established Church, 368.
Evil Eye, 189, 278, 407. 408.
Eyre (Snizort), 238.
Eyre (Raasay), 441, 455.
Eynort, 17, 133, 325, 358.

"Failte nan Leodach," 114, 201.
"Fàilte Ruairi Mhoir," 202.
Fairy Flag, 35, 73.
Falkirk, 445..
Farquharson, John, 366.
Farthing, Land (Feorling), 21, 99.
Fàsach, 312.
Fauna, 339, 408, 409.
Fearns, 455.

"Feasgar Luain," 344, 346, 348.
Feinne, 173.
Feorlig, 373, 384.
Ferguson, Capt., 232, 234, 248, 252, 253, 254, 446.
Fernaig, MS., 436, 442.
Fernilea, 384.
Ferrying, 300.
Fevers, 186, 275.
Fiddle, 174, 175.
Fife, or Gentlemen, Adventurers, 89, 116, 119.
Fionnladh na Plaide Bàine, 70.
Firearms, 147, 176, 281.
Fishbourne, Capt., 380, 401.
Fishing, 39, 101, 144, 145, 180, 298, 299, 301, 388, 396, 397, 435, 452.
Fixing Boundaries, 320.
Fladda Chuain, 16, 235, 278, 279, 322.
Flax, 179, 314.
Flo, Dun, 166.
Flodden, 96.
Flodigarry, 247, 250.
Flora, 341.
"Florida," 183.
Football, 143.
Forbes, Bishop, 234, 249, 252, 279, 287, 447.
Forbes, President, 221, 223, 224, 226, 229.
Forbes, Rev. John, 375.
Fort Augustus, 248, 249, 254.
Fosterage, 138.
Foxes, 101, 340.
Fraser-Macintosh, Charles, 422.
Fraser, Major, 369, 370.
Fraser, Rev. Lachlan, 169.
Fraser, Sheriff, 385
Fraser, Thomas, 298, 299.
Free Church, 369, 371, 372, 374, 376.
Free Presbyterian Church, 376.
French Revolution, 409, 410, 454.
"Fuaim an t-Saimh," 152, 153, 194, 195.
Funeral Cairns, 258, 260.
"Furnace," The, 232, 246, 248, 448, 449.

Gaelic, 95, 133, 134, 170, 329, 414.
Gairloch, 348, 349.
Galbraith, Rev. J., 371.
Galtrigil, 59, 200, 233.
Games, 102, 143, 173, 176, 265, 406.
Garrafad, 363.
Gedintailor, 389, 391.
Geikie, Sir Archd., 385, 423.
Gesto, 111, 112, 113, 219.
"Gesto Collection," 354.
Gesto Hospital, 353.
Gillesbuic Aotrom, 405.
Gladesmuir (Prestonpans), 223.
Glam, 239, 240.
Glaspheighinn, 21.
Glass, Rev. John, 368, 369, 374.
Glen Brittle, 383.
Glen Corrodale, 231.
Glendale, 417.
Glendale, Battle of, 52.
Glenelg, 24, 34, 42, 57, 61, 62, 66, 89, 124, 206, 223, 225, 254.
Glen Haultin, 324, 371.
Glen Hinnisdale, 237.
Glenmore, 401, 414.
Glenshiel, 215, 216.
Glen Sligachan, 242, 243.
Gen Vargill, 241.
Goat, 306, 340.
Gocaman, 161.
Gordon, Sir Robt., 437, 441.
Gordon, Lord Lewis, 228.
Gradaning, 182, 320, 321.
Graham, Rev. F., 375.
Graham, Gillespic, 350.
Grant, Rev. Jas., 373.
Grassum, 178.
Greek, 174.
Greig, Rev. Wm., 375.
Greshornish, 354.
Grinding, 186.
Grouse, 101, 341, 452.
Gruagach, 189, 277, 321.
Grula, 219.

Haco, 12, 431.
Hagbut, 148.
Hallaig, 455.
Halfpenny land (Lephin), 21, 99.
Harold (The Fairhaired), 10, 18.
Harp, 137, 143, 173, 174, 175, 187.
Harper, 174, 265.
Hares, 340, 409.
Harlosh, 30.
Harris, 118, 152, 200, 206, 292.
Harrowing, 186, 275, 315.
Harta Corrie, 31.
Hawks, 341.
Hay, 315, 395.
Hay, Capt., 445.
Hazel, 341.
Heiress of the Isles, 61, 62, 63, 65, 68, 69, 76, 92.
Henderson, Dr. George, 8, 200.
Hides, 100.
Hill of Pleas, 177.
Hill of Strife, 177.
Horses, 300, 340, 409, 452.
Hospitality, 186, 258, 308, 309.
Housing, 185, 330, 331, 378, 379.
Hungladder, 21, 138.
Hunting, 101, 176.
Husabost, 422.

Iain Lom, 54, 113, 126, 127, 128, 135, 147, 150, 151, 163, 164, 166, 171, 175, 184, 185, 191, 192.

Idrigill, 208, 209.
Implements, 275.
Incantations, 277.
Indemnity Act, 246.
Independent Companies, 252.
Indian Mutiny, 364.
Industries, 300, 301, 316, 398, 399.
Inns, 305.
Inver., 448.
Inverury, 230, 252.
Inverlarich, 150.
Inverlochy, 213.
"Iorram na Truaighe," 102, 125.
Iorrams, 318, 319, 435.
Ire., 441.
Isabella of Glengarry, 122, 202.
Isay, 430, 433, 435.
Isleornsay, 297.
Ivory, Sheriff, 389.

Jail, Portree, 377.
James II., 158.
James IV., 431.
James V., 56, 68.
James VI., 89, 90, 114.
James Gruamach 78, 79, 80, 93.
John of the Axe, 432. 433, 434.
Johnson, Dr., 15, 247, 248, 250, 253, 261, 264, 277, 285, 286, 288, 295, 296, 297, 303, 304, 308, 309, 310, 323, 345, 363, 406, 450, 451, 452.
Justice, 177, 309, 310.

Kelp, 219, 271, 274, 296, 297, 298, 382, 396.
Kelvin, Lord, 423.
Kensalyre, 426.
Ketill Flatnose, 10.
Kilbride, 276, 385, 386.
Kilchrist (Kilchro), 92, 93, 132, 375.
Kildonan, 171.
"Kildoren," 171.
Killiecrankie (Raon Ruairi), 151, 158, 164, 165, 210, 216, 260.
Kilmolowokin Church (Raasay), 91.
Kilmaluag Rectory, 92.
Kilmaree, 17, 121, 242, 245.
Kilmartin, 92, 96, 101, 276.
Kilmhor, 79, 93, 166, 171, 255, 283.
Kilmuir (Dunvegan), 91.
Kilmuir (Trotarnish), 53, 87, 91, 92, 169, 171, 172, 184, 248, 250, 261, 262, 311, 314, 322, 324, 327, 352, 402, 414.
Kilt, 256, 257.
Kilvaxter, 92, 93.
Kingsborough, 70, 101, 113, 238, 247, 248, 305.
Kinloch, 399.
Kinlochairnort, 242.
Kippen, Rev. J., 371.
Knox, Andrew, Bishop, 117, 118, 119, 131, 132, 133.
Knox, John, 253.
Krakinish, 384.
Kyleakin, 12, 211, 212, 222, 226, 271, 298, 350.
Kylerhea, 127, 128, 271, 305, 397, 399, 400.

Labour Songs, 318, 319, 406.
"Ladi Dubh," 346.
Lady D'Oyly, 453, 454.
"Lady D'Oyly's Salute," 453.
Lady Grange, 207.
Lady Margt. Montgomery, 217, 218, 233, 234, 235, 280, 283.
Lag na Bathaich, 240.
Lag Buidhe, 152, 226.
Lainnire Riabhach, 110.
"Lament for Culloden," 251.
Lamont, Rev. Jos., 369, 372.
Land Tenure, 20.
Latha na Creich Mhoir, 437.
"Latha Siubhal Sleibhe," 199, 205.
Latin, 174, 251, 263, 264, 321, 328.
Leachach, 243.
Leac Li, Battle of, 82.
Leases, 275, 311, 312.
Leod, 23, 24, 25, 61.
Lethpheighinn, 21.
Letter of Tack, 179.
Lewie Caw, 241, 244.
Loch Ainort, 242.
Loch an Fheidh, 439.
Loch Bay, 399.
Loch Leathan, 239.
Loch na Dail, 254.
Loch Shiant, 276.
Loch Slapin, 242, 356.
Lochiel, 231.
Longevity, 333, 334, 402.
Lonmore, 418.
Lon Ruadh, 237.
"Lord MacDonald's Reel," 285.
Loudon, Earl of, 228, 229.
Luib, 242.
"Luinneag Mhic Leoid," 123, 153, 194, 195.
"Luinneag Ghaoil," 419.
Lyndale, 25, 42, 60, 63, 65, 89, 102, 171, 292, 368, 371, 372.
"Lyon in Mourning," 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 234, 235, 242, 251, 252, 287, 296, 357, 446.

MacArthur, Rev. D., 372.
MacArthur, Rev. H., 371.
MacArthurs, The, 114, 138, 200, 201, 211, 265, 320.
MacAshills, 30, 112, 147, 338, 361, 362, 412, 413.

MacAulay, Rev. Daniel, 261, 262.
MacBain, Dr. Alexr., 422.
MacCallum, Rev. Don., 393.
MacCallum, Rev. Duncan, 374.
MacCodrum, John, 256, 281, 282, 283, 329.
MacColl, Rev. A., 374.
MacCrimmon, Donald Ban, 202, 226, 229.
MacCrimmon, Donald Mor, 114, 201.
MacCrimmon, Iain Dubh, 202.
MacCrimmon, Iain Odhar, 200, 203, 204.
MacCrimmon, Malcolm, 202.
MacCrimmon, Padruig Mor, 123, 152, 202, 443.
MacCrimmon, Padruig Og, 138, 202.
"MacCrimmon's Lament," 227.
MacCrimmons, The, 59, 95, 108, 138, 200, 265, 292, 320, 406.
MacDermid (School), 414.
MacDonald (Chiefs)—
  Sir Alexander, 52, 208, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 223, 224, 225, 226, 233, 248, 254, 255, 266, 270, 280, 296, 445.
    Sir Alexander, 1st Lord, 280, 285, 286, 287, 310, 326, 337, 350, 352.
    Sir Alexander, 2nd Lord, 287, 350, 351, 373, 397, 399.
    Donald Gallach, 37, 46, 352.
    Donald Gorm, 52, 53, 54, 56, 61, 98, 352.
    Donald Gorm Mor, 52, 61, 75, 78, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 89, 90, 94, 104, 105, 114, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 132, 133, 142, 150, 179, 201, 352, 438.
    Donald Gorm Og MacGillesbuic Chleirich, 52, 54, 78, 122, 126, 127, 128, 129, 133, 143, 144, 148, 191.
    Donald Gormson, 52, 62, 70, 76, 77, 78, 93, 100, 352, 435.
    Donald Gruamach, 42, 45, 47, 49, 50, 51, 52, 78, 136, 352.
    Sir Donald (Do'ull a' Chogaidh), 55, 164, 165, 167, 206, 210, 211, 213, 214, 216, 273, 274, 352.
    Sir Donald, 3rd Baronet, 151, 158, 163, 164, 166, 171, 178, 180, 186, 216, 352.
    Sir Donald, 5th Baronet, 214, 215, 216.
    Gillesbuic Dubh, 37, 39, 46, 47, 51, 359.
    Godfrey, 3rd Lord, 287, 351, 352, 354.
    Godfrey, 4th Lord, 352, 381.
    Hugh, 1st of Sleat, 34, 36, 45, 46, 352.
    Sir James (Marcellus), 52, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 320, 329, 438.
    Sir James Mor, 54, 113, 124, 125, 128, 135, 146, 148, 150, 151, 155, 161, 163, 171, 177, 178, 179, 184, 185, 192, 193, 195, 216, 235, 261, 352.
    Sir James of Oransay, 167, 213, 215, 216.
    John, 2nd of Sleat, 37, 45, 47.
    Ronald Archibald, 6th Lord, 352.
    Somerled, 5th Lord, 352.
MacDonald of Aird, 151.
MacDonald of Bernisdale, 151, 410, 411
MacDonald of Capstil, 260.
MacDonald of Castleton, 124, 128, 147, 221, 231, 233, 234, 236, 363.
MacDonald of Glenmore, 151.
MacDonald of Kingsborough, Alexr., 221, 222, 224, 234, 237, 238, 248, 249. 250, 252, 280, 287.
MacDonald of Kingsborough, Allan, 233, 247, 248, 250, 304, 338.
MacDonald of Knock, Major Allan, 221, 232, 252, 253, 251, 254.
MacDonald of Lyndale, 400, 410, 454.
MacDonald of Ord, 254, 338, 411.
MacDonald of Sartil, 151.
MacDonald of Skaebost, 422.
MacDonald of Skerinish, 128, 147.
MacDonald of Thorpe Hall, Sir A., 351.
MacDonald of Treaslane, 411.
MacDonald Alexander (Alasdair MacColla), 127, 128.
MacDonald, Archibald (Ciaran Mabach), 111, 134, 146, 147, 150, 151, 175, 176, 184, 191, 192, 193.
MacDonald, Archibald (Lord Chief Baron) 287.
MacDonald, Donald Roy, 221, 222, 234, 235, 239, 240, 246, 250, 251, 263, 279.
MacDonald, Flora, 229, 231, 233, 234, 236, 237, 246, 248, 250, 253, 288, 304, 450.
MacDonald, Brig.-Gen., Rt. Hon., J.H.A., 411.
MacDonald, Hugh (Sennachie), 12, 35, 36, 48, 151, 358, 430.
MacDonald, Major-Gen. Norman, 411.
MacDonald, Rev. Coll., 368, 370, 371, 380, 381, 385, 403.
MacDonald, Rev. Donald, 375.
MacDonald, Rev. Hugh, 151, 261, 325.
MacDonald, Ronald (Bard), 253, 354.
MacDonald, Sir John, Adj-Gen., 410, 411.
MacDougall, Rev. J. 371.
MacEachain, Neil, 231, 236, 237, 238, 246.

MacEachran, Rev. Duncan, 371.
MacFarlane, Rev. Don., 376.
MacGregor, Rev. A., 87, 353, 363, 373, 394, 403.
MacGregor, Rev. R., 373.
Macintyres, The, 138, 265.
MacIvor, Rev. A., 375, 377, 394.
MacIvor, Rev. J., 373, 375.
MacInnes, 252, 365.
MacKay, Angus, 454.
Mackay, John (Piobaire Dall), 8, 201, 216, 220, 280, 347, 453.
MacKay, G. G., 455.
MacKay, Pipers, 320, 406.
MacKay's "Collection of Music," 227.
MacKenzie, Kenneth (Bard), 303.
MacKinnon, Ewen, 51, 58.
MacKinnon, Iain Dubh, 243, 251, 252, 357, 445, 446.
MacKinnon, Lachlan, 98, 116, 118, 120, 132, 139, 140, 148, 198, 358, 441, 442.
MacKinnon, Lachan, (Lachlain MacThearlaich Oig), 134, 198, 205, 267.
MacKinnon of Corry, 218, 357.
MacKinnon of Elgol, 244, 245, 252, 357.
MacKinnon, Rev. Donald, 168, 358, 375.
MacKinnon Rev. Donald, (1st of Succession), 199, 327.
MacKinnon Rev. Donald, (3rd of Succession), 358, 375, 413.
MacKinnon, Rev. John (Bracadale), 133, 169, 170, 171, 358.
MacKinnon Rev. John (Strath), 140, 252, 327, 358, 375.
MacKinnon, Rev. Neil (Bracadale), 374.
MacKinnon, Rev. Neil (Strath), 132, 139, 168, 358.
MacKinnons, The, 55, 82, 98, 198, 212, 356, 365, 413.
MacLachlan, Rev. S., 371.
MacLean, Dr. John, 52, 136, 235, 264, 283.
MacLeans, The, 186.
MacLennan, Rev. F., 132, 168.
MacLeod (Chiefs of Dunvegan)—
    Alasdair Crotach, 36, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 47, 49, 50, 52, 53, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 65, 67, 71, 95, 123, 197, 200.
    Iain a' Chuil Bhàin, 34, 63, 64, 69.
    Iain Breac, 125, 139, 151, 156, 157, 158, 159, 161, 162, 164, 168, 174, 176, 181, 195, 196, 197, 261.
    Iain Dubh, 64, 65, 67, 69, 71.
    John Borb, 32, 33, 63.
    John Mor, 123, 124, 126, 130, 139, 148, 152, 195, 197, 202, 441.
    John Norman, 292, 352.
    John (3rd Chief), 28, 29.
    Malcolm (2nd Chief), 26, 27.
    Norman (1st Chief), 25, 26.
    Norman (11th Chief), 66, 67, 68, 69, 74, 93, 94, 102, 436.
    Norman (18th Chief), 161, 163, 205.
    Norman (22nd Chief), 354, 355, 381.
    Norman, Magnus, 355.
    Norman, The General, 194, 202, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 338.
    Norman, "The Wicked Man," 202, 206, 207, 208, 210, 224, 225, 226, 287, 288, 289.
    Roderick (17th Chief), 161, 162, 177, 181, 198, 206.
    Roderick (The Witty), 125, 152, 155, 179, 193, 194, 198.
    Sir Reginald, 355.
    Sir Rory Mor, 75, 84, 88, 90, 102, 104, 105, 108, 109, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 122, 123, 124, 129, 132, 133, 142, 144, 147, 153, 194, 195, 197, 198, 201, 202, 292.
    William Cléireach, 29, 30, 32.
    William, Dubh, 34, 63.
    William (8th Chief), 62, 71.
    William (12th Chief), 75, 98.
MacLeods—Origin, 23, 205, 229.
MacLeod, Chiefs, (Raasay), 80, 93, 228, 430, 431.
    Alexander (2nd Chief), 432.
    Alexander (5th Chief), 148, 441.
    Alexander (6th Chief), 442.
    Alexander (8th Chief), 444.
    Clann 'ic Ille Chalum, 80, 93, 430, 431.
    Iain Garbh, 123, 126, 442.
    James, 400, 410, 454.
    John (10th Chief), 320, 444, 446, 452, 454.
    John (Last Chief), 412, 454.
    Malcolm Garbh, 432.
    Malcolm (3rd Chief), 436.
    Malcolm (4th Chief), 99, 440, 441.
    Malcolm (9th Chief), 223, 324, 357, 444, 449, 451.
MacLeod, Donald (Bard), 24, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420.
MacLeod, Mary (Mairi Nin Alasdair Ruaidh), 23, 24, 25, 32, 114, 123, 126, 134, 137, 152, 154, 155, 173, 174, 176, 181, 193, 196, 442, 443.
MacLeod, Murdo, 416.
MacLeod, Neil, 387, 393, 413, 420, 425, 426, 428, 429.
MacLeod, Lt.-Gen. Sir John, 338.
MacLeod, Major-Gen. Donald, 412.
MacLeod, Major-Gen. William, 412.
MacLeod of Balmeanach, 237, 337.
MacLeod of Bernera (Donald), 163, 224, 412.

MacLeod of Bernera (John), 208.
MacLeod of Bernera, Sir Norman, 23, 24, 123, 152, 153, 154, 161, 176, 181, 194, 195.
MacLeod of Borline, 412.
MacLeod of Brae (Capt. Malcolm), 223 224, 232, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 251, 253, 445, 447, 449, 451.
MacLeod of Camustinivaig, 338, 451.
MacLeod of Drynoch, 105, 107, 147, 220.
MacLeod of Eyre, Dr. Murdo, 239, 444, 445, 446.
MacLeod of Galtrigil, Donald, 229, 230, 231, 232, 254, 448.
MacLeod of Gesto, 147, 354, 412.
MacLeod of Greshornish, 123, 216.
MacLeod of Hamera, 123, 154, 214.
MacLeod of Lochbay, 248, 288, 291, 337.
MacLeod of Lyndale, 125.
MacLeod of Meadale, 152.
MacLeod of MacLeod, Canon, R.C., 23, 25, 69, 71, 102, 121, 125, 162, 355.
MacLeod of Minginish, 82, 110.
MacLeod of Morvern, 300.
MacLeod of Ollach, 338, 451.
MacLeod of Orbost, 154, 412.
MacLeod of Rigg, 444, 451.
MacLeod of Suardal, 148, 324.
MacLeod of Talisker, 147, 216, 228, 246, 252, 253, 281, 288, 289, 337, 448.
MacLeod of Talisker, Sir Roderick, 123, 152, 156, 198, 443.
MacLeod of Ullinish, Sheriff A., 309, 324.
MacLeod of Unish, 212, 219, 412.
MacLeod of Varkasaig, 412, 454.
MacLeod of Vatten, 420.
MacLeod, Rev. Donald (Duirinish), 317, 325.
MacLeod, Rev. Donald (Strath), 262, 326.
MacLeod, Rev. John, 260, 262, 325.
MacLeod, Rev. Malcolm, 16, 299, 311, 315, 324, 332, 367, 371, 445.
MacLeod, Rev. Norman (Duirinish), 262.
MacLeod, Rev. Norman (Portree), 371.
MacLeod, Rev. Dr. Norman (Cairid nan Gaidheal), 202, 228, 292, 410.
MacLeod, Rev. Roderick, 367, 368, 369, 371, 372, 374, 381, 400, 410, 445,
MacLeod, Rev. Dr. Roderick, 305, 324, 325, 367, 374.
MacLeod, Rev. William, 262.
"MacLeod's Defeat at Inverury," 228.
MacNab, Neil, 364.
"Mac na Braiche," 345.
MacNeill, Rev. A, 375.
MacNicoll, MacConneill, 79, 93, 359, 360.
MacPhail, Rev. J. S., 373, 375.
MacPherson, James, 282.
MacPherson, Mary, 393, 410, 420, 421, 422.
MacPherson, Neil, 393.
MacPherson, John, 169, 173, 174, 263.
MacPherson, Sir John, 336, 337.
MacPherson, Rev. Dugald, 169, 190, 262, 263.
MacPherson, Rev. Dr. John, 8, 325.
MacPherson, Rev. Martin (Duirinish), 168, 169.
MacPherson, Rev. Martin (Grandson), 262, 263, 327, 332.
MacPherson, Rev. Dr. Martin (Sleat), 166, 169, 298, 312.
MacQueen, Peter, 240, 251.
MacQueen, Rev. Angus, 170, 172.
MacQueen, Rev. Archibald, 132, 169, 261, 361.
MacQueen, Rev. Archibald (Grandson), 324, 363.
MacQueen, Rev. Donald (Kilmuir), 14, 177, 261, 267, 277, 302, 323, 363, 364, 450.
MacQueen, Rev. Donald (Snizort), 261, 363.
MacQueen, Rev. Hew, 133.
MacQueen, Rev. William, 324, 363.
MacQueens The, 147, 363.
MacRae of Inverinate, 443.
MacRae, Rev. A., 374.
MacRaild, 25.
MacRury, 134, 148, 328, 300.
MacSween, 12, 65, 67, 123, 147.
MacVurich, 114, 115, 126, 128, 135, 136, 137, 154, 205, 352.
Maelruba, 17, 133.
Magnus Barelegs, 11, 18, 22.
Mahratta War, 412.
Maide Doicheallach, 258.
"Mairi Bhaile Chro," 427.
Maintenance, 139.
"Maldonn," 201.
Manish, 455.
Mannir, 312.
Manrent, 38, 139.
Manuring, 395.
Maol Luag, 17
"Marbhrann do Iain Garbh," 443.
Marble, 398.
Marclan, 312.
Marishader, 323, 364.
Marriages, 141, 187, 188, 316, 317.
Martin, Miss A., 206, 207, 288.
Martin, Martin, 5, 8, 20, 142, 161, 174, 190, 191, 257, 260, 264, 268, 273, 278, 334, 444.
Martin, Rev. A., 372, 374.
Martin, Rev. D., 184, 283, 309, 311, 323, 324, 364, 373.
Martins, The, 147, 323, 367.
Martin of Bealach, 250, 364, 453.
"Mary of the Castle," 44.

Matheson (Aosdana), Bard of Seaforth, 212.
Merklands, 21, 100.
Mice, 340.
Michael, St., 258, 259.
Milesians, 95.
Military, 337, 338, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413.
Militia, 231, 236, 240, 253, 254, 446, 447.
Milling, 182, 300, 320, 321.
Mills, 181, 398.
Millstones, 398.
Milovaig, 378.
Minginish, 25, 42, 62, 92, 110, 253, 358, 383, 402.
Mogstadt, 234, 236, 254.
"Moladh a' Bhaird air a Thir Fein," 347, 348.
"Moladh an Uisge Bheatha," 345.
"Moladh na h-Oighe Ghaidhealaich, 343.
Moles, 409.
Monk, Gen. 155.
Montrose, Marquis of, 124, 128, 149, 180, 183.
"Moon," The, 117.
Morals, 268, 308, 376, 377.
Morrison (Clarsair Dall), 134, 137, 157, 162, 174, 267.
Morrison, Rev. Roderick, 374.
"Mo Rùn air mo Leannan," 453.
Mugarry, 401, 414.
Multure, 181.
Munro, Dean, 97, 99, 101, 431.
Munro, Donald (Blind), 366, 367.
Munro, Rev. Christopher, 373.
"Murrain," 274, 277.
Murray, Lord George, 241.
Music, 265.

Nelson, Lord, 410.
Neolithic, 6.
Netmaking, 399.
Nicolson, Rev. Alexander, 169, 360.
Nicolson, Rev. Donald (Trotarnish), 169, 171, 172, 360.
Nicolson, Rev. Donald (Strath), 326, 327.
Nicolson, Rev. James, 325.
Nicolson, Rev. John (Portree), 325, 326, 370.
Nicolson, Alexander, Sheriff, 290, 391, 422, 423.
Nicolson's Rock, 240.
Nicolsons, The, 147, 169, 358, 359, 360.
Non-jurors, 168, 171.
Norse, 9, 10, 17, 18, 21, 53, 200.
"'Nuair Bha mi Og," 421.

Oak, 100, 341.
Oaths, 279.
Oats, 146, 179, 314.
O'Colgan, Allan, 116, 132.
Ochiltree, Lord, 117, 133, 142.
"Ode to the Wounded Foot," 251.
"Oinnseach," An, 203.
Ollach, 338.
Omhan, or Bland, 268.
"Oran air Gaol na h-Oighe," 342.
"Oran a Rinn am Bard ann an Duneideann," 342.
"Oran Aitreamh Ruairidh," 416, 417.
"Oran An t-Samhraidh," 347.
"Oran An Uillt Mhoir," 420.
"Oran Brathainn" (Quern Song), 112.
"Oran do Mharcuis nan Greumaich," 342.
"Oran do Thungaig," 420.
"Oran do'n Eilthireach," 453.
"Oran do Phrionnsa Tearlach," 453.
"Oran Eile," 345.
"Oran Gaoil," 454.
"Oran Mor ic Leoid," 197, 199.
"Oran Mhurachaidh Bhig," 417, 418.
"Oran Nan Ciobairean," 383.
"Oran Nan Croitearean Sgiathanach," 393.
"Oran na Seana Mhaighdinn," 427.
"Oran Reisimeid 'ic Shimidh," 419.
Orbost, 169, 174, 263, 354.
Ord, 258.
Organ, 175.
Ose, 383.
Osgaig, 455.
Ossian, 14.
Ossianic Controversy, 282, 323.
Ostig, 286, 327.

Pabay, 97, 198.
Parishes, 260, 261.
Partridges, 341.
Paupers, 186, 335, 336, 337, 405.
Peinduin, 248.
Peingown, 266.
Penifieler, 222.
Peninsular War, 297, 364, 409, 410, 411, 412.
Pennant, Thomas, 138, 182, 253, 264, 289, 292, 298, 305, 307, 308, 314, 322, 335.
Pennyland (Peighinn), 21, 99.
Philiphaugh, 128, 149.
Pigs, 306, 340, 409.
Pine, 341.
Piobaireachd, 200, 201.
Piper, 174, 406, 407.
Plata Ghran, 301.
Plough, 99, 275, 315.
Poaching, 148, 442.
Polecats, 409.
Pol Crubach, 102, 125.
Pollosgan, 405.
Population, 186, 401, 402.
Porringer, Captain, 165.

Portree, 57, 101, 103, 221, 232, 238, 246, 251, 261, 272, 282, 297, 305, 323, 367, 376, 399, 402, 414.
Portree Market, 101, 272.
Post Offices, 305.
Potato, 146, 268, 306, 314, 354, 379, 395,
Potato Famine, 399, 402, 404.
Poverty, 306, 307, 315, 334, 354, 379. 381, 383.
Presbytery of Skye, 133.
Presbyterianism, 169, 170, 261, 322, 360, 363.
Pressgang, 409, 417.
Prestonpans, 223.
Prices, 300, 396.
Prince Charlie, 221, 224, 228, 230, 234, 236, 239, 244, 246, 287, 445.
Protestants, 78, 79, 93, 94, 131, 259.
Ptarmigan, 341.
Puritans, 368.

Quarrels, 270.
Querns, 181, 182.

Raasay, 6, 7, 25, 39, 93, 183, 195, 208, 237, 239, 240, 296, 299, 338, 369, 371, 380, 398, 401, 414, 430, 451.
"Raasay Lament," 443.
"Raasay Love-lilt," 453.
Rabbits, 340, 452.
Rainy, Mr., 455.
"Rann Firinn," 418.
"Molaidh a' Bhata," 418.
Rats, 340, 341, 388.
Ravens, 341.
Reaping, 99, 186, 315.
Rebellion of '15, 55, 207, 211, 212.
Rebellion of '45, 210, 219, 220, 241, 244, 294, 341, 363, 445.
Recreations, 174.
"Regulations for Chiefs," 117, 120, 128, 130, 133, 135, 140, 178.
Rents, 99, 100, 178, 273, 296, 302, 307, 310, 382.
Restoration, 150, 155, 169, 171, 202.
Reid, Rev. Jas., 370, 371.
Reid, Rev. Rod., 374.
Relief Works, 381.
Rheumatism, 325.
Riddles, 173.
Rigg, 338, 363.
"Ri Taobh na Traigh," 428.
Roads, 304, 305, 399, 401.
Roag, 29, 66.
Robertson-MacLeod, 354.
Rodel, 60, 61, 64, 95, 108, 162.
Roe, 100, 325, 340.
Roman Catholics, 259, 323, 368.
Rona, 25, 39, 93, 97, 261, 299, 312, 369, 401, 406, 430, 446.
"Rory Mor's Drinking Horn," 27.
Ross, Marion, 344, 347.
Ross, Rev. D., 372, 373.
Ross, Rev. Jas., 374.
Ross, William, 303, 342, 344, 346, 348, 349, 415.
Rossinish, 231, 236.
"Rout of Moy," 202, 228, 230, 253.
Royal Hotel (MacNab's Inn), 238.
"Royal Sovereign," 246.
Ru' an Dùnain, 30, 338, 361.
Rudha Hunish, 57.
Rudha na h-Easgainne, 245.
Ruairi Nimheach (Rod. the Venemous), 78, 98, 433, 435, 439.
Runrig, 274.
Rye, 146, 179, 314.

Saoi, 39.
Salt, 297, 299, 396.
"Sath-Ghal Mhàiri nin Alasdair Ruaidh," 194.
Scalpay, 198, 310, 314, 406.
Schoolmasters, 259, 415.
Sconser, 223, 225, 242, 305, 378, 387, 393, 400, 403.
Score Bay, 53, 324.
Scorrybreck, 147, 169, 239, 242, 243, 273, 340, 359, 384.
Scots Brigade, 253.
Scott, Sir Walter, 304.
Screapadale, 455.
Seasoning of foods, 269.
Second-Sight, 190, 407.
Servants, 301, 302.
Services, 273, 302.
Sgeir Mhor, 239.
Shaw, Rev. J. 367, 373, 374.
Sheep, 408, 409, 455.
Sheep, Indigenous, 99, 180, 306, 339, 340.
Sheilings, 313.
Sheriffmuir, 167, 213, 216, 266, 356.
Shinty, 143, 368, 406.
Shoemaking, 300.
Shulista, 52, 136, 235, 264.
Skaebost, 50, 171.
Skene, 23, 61, 71.
Skye (Derivation), 7, 8, 9.
Sleat, 21, 42, 45, 47, 57, 62, 76, 79, 100, 103, 119, 132, 136, 139, 168, 170, 178, 217, 260, 266, 283, 312, 323, 324.
Sligachan, 101, 241, 242, 399.
Sligachan, Battle of, 30, 31, 361.
Sloc Mhairearaid, 73.
Smallpox, 186, 275, 332, 401, 403.
Smith, Prof. Adam, 282.
Smith, Alexander, 338, 411.
Smiths, 300, 301.
Snizort, 21, 93, 101, 132, 139, 248, 261, 290, 297, 311, 323, 368, 402, 414, 431.

Snuff, 185.
Somerled, 11, 21, 352, 358.
"Soiridh le Eilean a' Cheò," 421, 422.
"Soitheach nan Daoine," 218, 219.
Souming, 313.
Spinet, 175.
Spinning, 186.
Sports, 258.
Squatters, 384.
St. Columba, 6, 15, 16, 17. 278.
St. Columba's Loch, 5, 6, 12, 16, 57, 398.
St. Kilda, 209, 210.
Staffin, 195.
Stanhope, 314, 326, 377, 397, 406.
"Statistical Account," New, 140, 252, 321, 334, 400, 403.
"Statistical Account," Old, 166, 202, 298, 299, 320, 334, 363, 404.
Stature, 333.
"Statutes of Iona" 118 120, 126, 128, 130, 142.
Steamships, 401.
Stein, 98, 305, 397, 399.
Stenschol, 169.
Stewart, General, 267, 280, 328, 411.
Stock, 313, 314, 339, 340, 408, 452.
Stone Circles, 6.
Stornoway, 198, 231.
Storr, 239.
Strath, 101, 116, 127, 132, 140, 168, 171 186, 261 297, 322, 357, 402, 408.
Strathaird, 240, 243, 340, 357.
Strathmor, 242.
Strath na Créithich, 242.
Stuart, John Roy, 224, 229.
Suishnish (Strath), 384, 385, 386.
Suishnish (Raasay), 455.
Superstitions, 187, 189, 190, 260, 276, 278, 279, 321, 322, 407, 408.
Suter, Rev. J., 367, 373, 374.
Symbolic Stones, 7.

Tack Duty, 178.
Tacks, 178, 179, 382.
Tacksmen, 173, 178, 185, 268, 273, 307, 328, 331.
Taghairm, 322.
Tailors, 301.
Talisker, 353, 383.
Talisker Distillery, 377.
"An Talla 'm bu Ghnàth," 194, 195.
Talorgan, 17, 57.
Tanning, 300, 398, 399.
Tarskavaig, 258, 327.
Tartan, 22, 102, 302, 304.
Tea, 307, 308.
Temperance, 376.
Thomas, Capt., 214.
"Thug mi Pòg do Laimh 'n Rìgh," 202.
"Tigh a' Mhisgear," 428.
Tigh a' Phuirt, 305.
Tirunga, 21, 43, 93, 99.
Tobacco, 363.
Tobar a' Phrionnsa, 237, 243.
Tobar Dho'uill Ghruaimich, 52.
Tobar a' Chinn, 140.
Tobar Tellibreck, 269.
"Tog orm mo Phiob," 123.
Tolmie Rev. J. 374.
"Tormad nan tri Tormaid," 194, 292.
Tormicheag, 242, 387.
Tormore, 166.
Torrin, 393.
Totarder, 383.
Tote, 441.
Totterome, 239, 363.
Trade, 39, 100, 143, 180, 281, 397.
Transhumance, 312, 313.
Troday, 16, 321.
Trotarnish, 21, 25, 42 47, 50, 53, 55, 57, 62, 79, 84, 89, 96, 103, 119, 126, 134, 138, 146, 162, 177, 191, 217, 235, 251, 265, 276, 297, 341, 367, 384, 406
Trousers, 256, 257.
Trumpan, 72, 73, 92, 210.
Tuasdale, 383.
Tuatha de Danaan, 95,
"Tuireadh air Cluainidh," 422.
Turnips, 395.
"Turus Dhomhnuill do Ghlascho," 428.
Typhoid, 403.

Uamha Catriona Duibhe, 448.
Uig, 92, 269, 276, 305, 369, 400.
Uisdean MacGhillesbuic Chléirich, 52, 64, 80, 82, 84, 86, 93, 98, 113, 327.
Uist, 119, 168, 191, 213, 224, 248, 265, 282, 352.
Ullinish 177, 257, 383.
Unga, 21.
Ungnàcille, 367.
United Presbyterian Church, 376.

Vaccination, 332, 401.
Vagabonds, 186.
Violin, 175, 265, 366, 367, 406.

Wadset, 179.
Wages, 302, 399.
Waternish, 21, 25, 33, 43, 72, 74, 85, 86, 89, 92, 103, 119, 209, 236, 292, 430.
Waterstein, 388.
Waulking, 319, 406.
Weapons, 103, 147, 148, 176, 310.
Weasles, 340, 341.
Weather, 274, 306, 334, 335, 403, 405.
Weaving, 186.
Wells (Healing), 276.
Wheat, 314.

Whiskey, 184.
William III., 158, 166, 171.
" Williamson," Kenneth, 96.
Wines, 40, 143, 184.
Wolves, 101.
Wood, Mr., 455.
Wool, 100, 271.
Worcester, Battle of, 149, 152, 193, 196, 356.
Wrestling, 102, 143, 176.

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